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# PICTURESQUE ANNALES



*Paris, 11. Mars, 1844*

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# I R E L A N D

PICTURESQUE AND ROMANTIC.

BY LEITCH RITCHIE, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "THE MAGICIAN," &c.

WITH TWENTY ENGRAVINGS,

FROM DRAWINGS BY

D. M'CLISE, Esq. A.R.A., AND T. CRESWICK, Esq.

L O N D O N :

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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It was the Author's intention to have named this Work "Ireland and the Irish;" but, finding himself interdicted, for obvious reasons, from entering at large into various interesting topics, he contented himself with a less ambitious title. He hopes, notwithstanding, that from the present and following volume, there may be collected some notions of the country and the inhabitants, sufficiently distinct to serve at least as a ground-work for more important studies.

It is, perhaps, necessary to say at the outset—since Ireland is the theme—that the Author belongs to no political clique whatever. He has prosecuted his inquiries in the same spirit which

actuated him last year in Russia; and is, therefore, by no means sanguine in his hopes of the favour either of the friends or enemies of the Irish. The fate of his Russian speculations was indeed enough at once to impart a lesson and provoke a smile. The political press of this country attacked him for telling the truth on one side—one of its leading members returning the usual presentation copy with indignation!—and the Emperor of Russia, in order to punish his truth-telling on the other side, prohibited the unhappy book from entering his dominions.

As we get better acquainted with Russia, however, the character of the work, so far as regards its plain unadorned truths, will, the author is convinced, be better appreciated in England; while, in respect to Russia, he has the consolation to know that smuggled copies are at this moment circulating widely through the empire of the Tsar.



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# I R E L A N D

## PICTURESQUE AND ROMANTIC.

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### CHAPTER I.

The Bay of Dublin and the Bay of Naples—Physical and moral Comparison—Denial of the Existence of strong Political Feeling in Ireland—Dunleary and its Column—Beggars—Aspect of Dublin—The High Dama and the naked Children—Street Architecture—Custom-house—The Courts of Law and their Avenue Hell—Bank of Ireland and the Corinthian Columns—University of Dublin.

IT is the fashion to liken the Bay of Dublin to the Bay of Naples; but no two objects can be more dissimilar. Even if the outline of the soil were not absolutely different,—which it is,—there are other circumstances which put comparison out of the question. The utter lifelessness of the southern wave gives, at first view, its character to the pic-



ture. A preternatural stillness appears to reign in the air ; and the eye of the voyager turns unconsciously to the dusky form of Vesuvius, as if seeking an explanation of the mystery. But, as the bark pursues her way through the dead water, and the terraced city, with its lines of palaces, and hanging gardens, comes distinctly into view, another power assumes sway over the scene. This is the sun. The calmness of the sea is no longer death, but sleep ; all is bright, all is beautiful, even tombs and ruins ; and, under the influence of the most delicious climate in the world, we do not wonder that the Neapolitans dance, and sing, and make love, or find it ready made, even in the lap of a volcano.

In the Bay of Dublin, on the other hand, the waters are almost always in a state of commotion. In general, the white-crested billows of the Irish Sea sweep in towards the land in regular lines ; and the roaring of the north and south Bulls, as the waves rush over the sands at the opposite ends of the semicircle, bids ominous welcome to the stranger. The sun is seldom visible for more than an instant. The sky is constantly traversed by heavy watery clouds. A dark shadow broods over the city, sometimes lessening, and sometimes increasing, according to its density, the effect of the spires and towers.

The two pictures, I have said, are very different ; yet both are admirable in their several kinds. This





*Lighthouse on the Coast*

was my first approach to Ireland by the Bay of Dublin ; and, after having explored a considerable portion of continental Europe in search of the picturesque, I certainly did not expect to find at home a scene of such splendid beauty on so great a scale. The state of the atmosphere was far from being Italian, but I imagined that the varieties of our northern clime were still better ; and the bright green colour of the land compensated for the presence of those water-clouds which keep vegetation fresh in the Emerald Isle when even the Garden of England is an arid waste.

The peninsula of Howth, on the right hand, appeared, through the watery air, like an island, only its bold front and lighthouse rising distinctly out of the deep. The annexed view, although taken in a somewhat more favourable state of the atmosphere, conveys an admirable idea of the scene. Across the low isthmus of Howth, the island called Ireland's Eye boomed full out of the mist ; and, further still, in the momentary changes of the atmosphere, that of Lambay looked like a cloud resting on the horizon. On the left hand, or southern point of the bay, lay the island of Dalkey, crowned with a martello tower ; while before me the whole shore was studded with villas and villages ; behind which, but verging southward, the woods and fields rose gradually up till they mingled with the Wicklow hills.

But to talk of the climate of Ireland in contra-



distinction to that of Naples, forces melancholy associations even upon the mere seeker of the picturesque. Poverty is nearly the same in both ; but in one it is attended by every evil, and in the other by every blessing of mere animal existence. The lazzarone of Naples enjoys life ; he of Ireland endures it. The Neapolitan laughs at his tatters, and, but for shame's sake—a very dull feeling with him—would prefer going stark naked. The Irishman crouches, cold and hungry, in his damp cabin, and receives from that atmosphere which preserves the boasted greenness of his Emerald Isle, only rheumatisms, agues, and a premature death. Yet in Naples, the happy poor are slaves, cowards, and more frequently than not, scoundrels ; while, in Ireland, the wretched peasantry are, generally speaking, brave and high-minded.

Like all other men who call their souls their own, I have a political bias, but I am no politician : and, to say the truth, in England a mere literary man cannot afford to be so. In France, in the political field, a reasonable share of talent would lead him to profit and preferment ; in England, his goal would be the garret or the workhouse. But, even if politics—which, in these last days, means party—were both my interest and inclination, I *could* not prosecute the calling in Ireland. It is all very well for strangers to the country to support the paper theories of their party about its evils and miseries ; but the man who has seen things with his own



eyes, who has sat by the hearth of the famishing peasant, who has made himself aware, from knowledge obtained upon the spot, that a very great proportion of the deaths which take place in Ireland are hastened, if not proximately caused, by insufficient food, clothing, and lodging—that man, if his speculations on the subject exhibit a<sup>1</sup> party bias, must be either a brute, or a most hopeless and impenetrable blockhead. For my own part, my heart smites me, that I have sat wilfully down to write a frivolous book upon a country where I have met so much to sadden and to shock me.

I have said that I am no politician ; but, for a better reason still, the reader need not be afraid of meeting with politics here—namely, *that I met with none in Ireland*. I am of opinion, that there is less political feeling in Ireland than in almost any other country in Europe ;<sup>2</sup> and that there is a great deal less than there ought to be. I met only with religious dissensions, caused by the circumstance of their being a state religion in the country which is not the religion of the mass of the inhabitants, and embittered by the bigotry and intolerance of both parties, but especially of the Catholics. I met with feuds of names and families, such as *cannot* by possibility exist in any country where the laws are good and well executed. I met with agrarian disturbances, with bloody revenges, with petty pilferings of food,<sup>3</sup> though few robberies of money ; but, above all things, I met with hunger—

hunger—hunger ! The Irish want no revolution ; they want merely food, clothing, and lodging ; they demand that the labourers of a country which annually exports millions worth of produce shall have wherewithal to live by their labour. The solitary fact, that the grand political question of the Repeal of the Union can be brought forward, or set aside, or hushed up for ever, according to the will of a single individual, ought to be enough of itself to convince every person of sane mind of the true state of public feeling in Ireland.

We landed on a magnificent pier at the village of Dunleary, the name of which was changed to “Kingstown,” in memory of a visit made in 1821 to that part of his dominions by George IV. A column rises on the spot where he stepped on shore, like the one on the pier of Calais in honour of Louis le Desiré ; or the one in the grounds of La Mailleraie on the Seine, in everlasting memory of the Duchess de Berri landing there one morning to breakfast. This is all very well. A column gives employment to labour, and adorns the place where it is reared : but to change the name of the village upon so frivolous a pretext, was a fraud committed by the Irish upon their ancestors. The extravagance of the national joy on this interesting occasion was in keeping with the character of the people ; but who did not laugh to see sober Sawney grovelling awkwardly in the mud at the feet of the golden image of royalty ? A man who does not pay

honour to the King must be a poor creature. He can have no respect, either for that state, of which the King is the head, or for that most miserable of units, himself; but he who does not know where respect ends, and adulation begins, should be transported to China or Russia, as a thing unworthy to live in a free country.

On stepping upon the pier, I was made aware in an instant that I had entered a country totally different in character and manners from any other part of the British dominions. The stranger is welcomed to Ireland by the beggars. Elsewhere they are shouldered out of the way by the porters, and their doleful litanies are unheard till the claims of business are satisfied. Here they take a distinct and prominent part in the scene. They are sacred from interference; and their voice has something of authority in it as they cry—

“God bless your honour! Welcome to the country, sir; and joy be on the day our eyes look upon you!” There is one peculiarity, however, which must above all things be noticed, as it marks a striking point in the national character. In France, the regular beggars, attending the diligence for instance, frequently form a kind of confrérie, and pay with strict honour into a public fund whatever they receive. In Ireland, no such society exists, and yet each begs for all. Their petition is never offered up in the singular number. It usually runs thus:

“Will your honour lave something for the poor



women? Think of the childer, sir!" It is not uncommon for the superior claims of one applicant to be acknowledged by all the rest. On a later occasion, at Cork, when the car in which I was about to travel was surrounded by a group of unhappy wretches, another approached, as if fearing to be too late, and told a story of terrible misery—of her husband having died that morning—of her children being now around the body of their father, and waiting till her return for something to break their fast.

"Is this true?" I demanded of the bystanders.

"It is too true!" replied the famishing group, shaking their heads, and shrinking away from competition with direr misery than their own. On the pier of Dunleary I threw something among the crowd, singling out one of them with my eye. It was picked up, however, by another at whose feet it fell, and the intended object of the bounty mechanically stretched out her hand to claim it, with an eager and imploring expression.

"Shame upon you!" cried her sister in misery, her eyes flashing with indignation—"Did you think I meant to keep it, when I saw that the gentleman looked at you?"

The whole of this part of the coast appears dangerous to navigation, and the Asylum Harbour at Dunleary must be as useful as it is splendid. The pier is twenty-eight hundred feet long, and the water so deep that a large Indiaman may anchor in safety at low tide. These gigantic constructions,

however, sink into insignificance when compared with the South Wall, a line of masonry, formed of blocks of granite, running into the sea very nearly three miles and a half. This serves as a barrier between the harbour and the sands of the South Bull. At the extremity is a lighthouse, and about midway a battery commanding the bay.

From the government steam packet I entered the mail coach, which was waiting despatches, and was speedily delivered, together with sundry letter bags, into the office of the rail-road. This road, which runs along the bay, is constructed on one of the finest sites in the world, but there is hardly time to note the points of the view. You are whirled along, by the enchantment of steam, so rapidly, that to look at the nearer objects makes the eyes ache; and in a quarter of an hour you are in Dublin. On reaching the station, a mail car received me, as well as its own peculiar freight, and we rattled along the streets at an "elegant" rate, our horn blowing without intermission, to admonish all meaner vehicles to keep out of the way of the King's coach. At the post office the guard descended with the letters, and the driver carried me on to Gresham's hotel.

I ought to mention here, as a circumstance honourable to the arrangements of the rail-road company, that I left my great coat, through forgetfulness, in one of the train coaches, and recovered



it again after the lapse of several weeks, the attendants declining to accept of any reward.

Hitherto I had seen nothing in Dublin but the splendid and imposing. No city in Europe has a finer avenue than the one by which I had entered; and Sackville Street, where I took up my abode, is in every way worthy of a great capital. Of this the reader will be convinced by a glance at the annexed view, of which the Trafalgar monument is the prominent object. Still it is unfair, as some late writers have done, to suggest comparisons with London. In the latter city every thing is on a gigantic scale. The crowd of magnificent carriages which blockade the streets can be seen no where else. The multitude of human beings flooding every thoroughfare—not in a hurry or bustle, but with a steady and severe determination—stamp a character upon the place perfectly unique. The buildings, even when mean in detail, seem absolutely awful in the enormous mass which they form. The provision for the wants and wishes of a society consisting of a million and a half of persons, far wealthier in the aggregate than in any other country in the world, is on a scale of corresponding grandeur. The procession of the mail coaches alone, on the King's birth-day, I consider to be one of the most splendid national spectacles existing. On returning from abroad, from even the greatest of the continental cities, I have always the impres-

sion upon my mind on entering London, that I am in the metropolis of Europe.

In Dublin, an oval figure, comprehending Sackville Street at one end and Stephen's Green at the other, would include nearly all that is fine or noble-looking in the city. It would include some well built streets; two spacious, but not otherwise very remarkable squares; a considerable number of rich shops; and several handsome and elegant, but no grand or august edifices. The fact, however, that these objects are in a small space—not more than suitable for the morning walk of a lady—makes the character of Dublin. The stranger has rarely any business beyond this line, within which he lives, moves, and hath his being, and consequently his impressions are all of a favourable nature.

But even if I had been less accustomed to perambulate cities with the purpose of observation, the appearance of wealth on my first entrance would not have deceived me with regard to Dublin. In the first place, a notice was posted on the walls, that it was feared it would be necessary for want of funds to shut the doors of the Mendicity Institution, to which at that time between two and three thousand wretches looked for their only meal. In the next place, in Sackville Street, near the door of Gresham's hotel, I saw lying upon the pavement entirely naked, two children of five or six years of age, shivering and moaning, and crouching close to each other for mutual warmth. This spectacle

may, for aught I know, have been a mere charity trap; but the indifference with which it was glanced at by the passers by proved their daily and hourly familiarity with scenes of misery and destitution. The "high dama," with her "brow of pride," and half haughty half sweet expression, turned a listless eye upon the scene as she glided by, not one shade of thought flitting over a cheek pale as well as fair, and, more frequently than otherwise, haggard with the traces of midnight dissipation.

The scene of the naked children and the "high dama" (for the lines of Byron cannot fail to be suggested by the aristocratical beauty of Ireland) present an epitome of Dublin. In all cities there is necessarily a commingling of wealth and poverty; but here the extremes of both meet in a manner that would be ludicrous were it not dismal. The exhibition of the naked children—which continued in all the public thoroughfares for several days—would not have been permitted by the police of any other town in Europe north of the Alps. The steps of the great houses are the favorite lounge for the miserable, who bask there in the sun, when there is any, undisturbed and unnoticed. The doors of the fruiterer and confectioner are besieged in like manner; and every where we see Want staring Luxury in the face, and pointing with her lean finger to the contrast.

This is not the case in the architecture of the







*Shamrock, 1840*



city. The aristocratical streets and buildings are in a circle of their own, which the passing stranger calls Dublin, but which in reality is only an insignificant portion, so far as space and numbers are concerned. Many of the other quarters are true St. Gileses, and are almost as little explored by the inhabitants of more opulent streets as that mysterious colony of the Irish in London.

The Bank of Ireland, the Four Courts, and the Custom-house are usually described as the principal public buildings of Dublin. As for the Custom-house, now the Stamp Office, it is so accurately given in the annexed engraving that I have little to say about it. It presents a handsome rather than an imposing front to the river, and with the assistance of the shipping, including of course a steamer or two, adorns a picturesque and animated scene. The harbour, formed by the quays which border the Liffey, is a straight avenue running up from the bay; and from the suddenness with which this commences, without narrowing gradually from the embouchure, it has more the appearance of a canal than of a river. The building itself is three hundred and seventy-five feet long, and two hundred and five deep. The south or principal façade is, as it ought to be, the handsomest. The dome is a hundred and twenty-five feet high, with a statue of Hope on the apex. The pediment of the portico is adorned by an allegory in alto relievo, representing the Union of

England and Ireland, with Neptune driving away Famine and Despair. This is the best employment Neptune could have in these piping times of peace; and now that the feet and fins of his Hippocampi have the assistance of steam, it is to be hoped he will be able to accomplish the task forthwith.

The courts of law are contained in a building commonly called the Four Courts, which also faces the Liffey. It is a vast and fine looking edifice, with a front of four hundred and forty feet. An immense dome, raised on a beautiful colonnade, crowns the whole pile, surmounting the great hall of the Courts. This building is new, having been opened only in 1797.

The old Four Courts adjoined Christ Church Cathedral. It was approached through a place called Hell, and over the arched entrance was appropriately set up an oaken image of the Devil. The locale, however, which was so stigmatized was in reality Christ Churchyard, and the black and hideous figure may have been, for aught I know, the Pope. The story of the advertisement is well known—"To be let, furnished apartments in Hell. N. B. They are well suited for a lawyer." In "Death and Doctor Hornbook," we observe that Burns knew of this residence of his Satanic majesty :

" But this that I am gaun to tell,  
Which lately on a night befell,  
Is just as true's the Deil's in hell,  
Or Dublin city."







The Bank of Ireland is one of the most beautiful buildings I ever saw ; but I cannot say that I was struck with its *grandeur* as many others have been. The principal façade consists of an Ionic colonnade, forming three sides of a concave quadrangle. The inner side is adorned with a handsome portico, whose columns support an entablature and pediment sculptured with the British arms, the apex crowned by a statue of Hibernia. On the right and left corner are statues of Commerce and Fidelity, modelled by Flaxman. This façade is connected with those of the east and west by circular walls. The western front is uniform with the principal one ; but the eastern, which is perhaps the most beautiful of the whole, is of the Corinthian order. Here was originally the entrance to the House of Lords, and it was by their command that this change was introduced. Without arguing on the propriety or impropriety of the House of Lords having a more ornamental entrance than the House of Commons, I may be permitted to say, that the whim which thus destroyed the symmetry of a fine national edifice tells sadly against their lordships' taste. It seems to me that the building is too low to have the grand effect which might be expected from its classical simplicity. This defect, however, if it be one, is not exaggerated by any very striking contrasts around it, such as make the Palace of the Legion of Honour on the banks of the Seine look like a child's toy.



The University of Dublin, nearly opposite the Bank, is the most honourable monument which the English nation possess in Ireland. In the beginning of the fourteenth century Pope Clement I. attempted to establish a university, but without success; and one which actually arose a little later sunk for want of funds to support it. Queen Elizabeth, however, effected by the energy of her royal will what neither pope nor prelate could accomplish; and the foundation of Trinity College was laid among the ruins of a priory founded in 1166 by Dermot Mac Murrough King of Leinster.

It is not my hint, however, to speak at large of the works of man—excepting those which have withered away from his grasp, and turned into ruins, and monuments of other times. But before quitting Dublin, we must glance at the living population; for this is an essential part of the picturesque and romantic of Ireland.

## CHAPTER II.

Change in Dublin Society--Carriages--Gentility--Moral Comparison with the English--Irish Vanity--Origin of Irish Impudence--Portrait of the Irish Gentleman--Of the Irish Jontleman--Of the Irish Lady--Of the Irish Leedy.

DUBLIN may be considered a modern city, since it was not till the reign of James I. that brick or stone was used for private houses. In the year 1790, according to Watson's Almanack, ninety-six Irish peers had town houses in Dublin; and this was the case also with almost all the members of the House of Commons, whose incomes were averaged by Grattan at four thousand pounds a year each. At present, there are only seven or eight resident peers, most of them prelates; and the incomes of the resident gentry might be fairly averaged at a very few hundreds.\*

\* An intelligent correspondent of the Dublin Penny Journal—a work which does honour to Dublin and to Ireland—says £200, and estimates the loss to the city at half a million a year.

It would be out of place to discuss here the question of the effect of this change upon the trade of the city ; but a little speculation may be permitted upon its influence on the manners of the inhabitants. It seems to me that the gentry of Dublin are too small and unimportant a body to present that almost impassable barrier of caste which they do elsewhere. The attempts at encroachment by the lower ranks are constant, because they are successful ; and, with a still greater affectation of what is called gentility than in other large towns, we find here a very extraordinary degree of republicanism in the constitution of society.

Some persons imagine that Lord Mulgrave is at the bottom of this mischief, as they term it ; but in reality it existed long before his time, and all that should be attributed to him is the discovery which it did not require much sagacity to make, that the little court of the Viceroy was quite unable of itself to stem a tide that had already set in. There must be *upper classes* every where ; and, on the withdrawal of those of Dublin, the next rank would insensibly take their place. A like change would go on through the whole mass of society, and a general struggle of castes would commence.

To “keep a carriage,” which in general means a car, is no distinction, for almost every body does this. Some years ago, the inside car was the genteelst, now it is the outside which is “the time of day.” This is a machine, as every body knows, in

which the company sit *dos à dos*, with a space between, resembling an open coffin, for luggage. Vehicles of this description answer the purpose also of hackney coaches, of which there are very few in Dublin; and there is also a still smaller public carriage, resembling a very little covered cart, with no aperture except the door, which is behind. A person who keeps a car goes in state to a party; the next in wealth appears in a hackney coach; the next on a hackney car; and I have seen ladies dressed like princesses coming out of the little covered cart.

Dress, however, is no more than carriage-keeping a distinction. In a very small country town, which because it is very small shall be nameless, while wandering in a grove appertaining to the Castle, I met a young lady in an elegant and fashionable morning dress. A novel was in one hand, and a parasol in the other; and a serving maiden walked demurely behind, with her eyes fixed upon the ground. This was doubtless the lady of the land; and, for a moment, I hesitated whether or not I should make an apology for my intrusion, having "dropped in" without the ceremony of asking leave. She passed loftily on, however, absorbed in the fate of Lord Augustus and Lady Wilhelmina; and I did not presume to disturb the meditations even of her maid, in order to give that fair vision a local habitation and a name. But this, as it fortunately happened, was of no consequence; for



in an hour after, I met her in one of the very few shops of the town, and had the honour of receiving from her own beautiful hands a pair of boot hose in exchange for one shilling and tenpence, or, as she more laconically expressed it, one and ten.

In Dublin, you may descend as far as you please in the scale of shopkeeping, or, indeed, of any ostensible business at all; and you will find the same wish to do the genteel in dress and every thing else. This, however, is only at the hours when the ladies of the family go abroad: at home they are as humbly clad as may be, and in the article of food are satisfied with what Londoners of the same class would turn away from with indignation. These ladies will tell you, and with perfect truth, that they went last evening to a party at Mr. Maloonies *in a carriage*, and they will add an anecdote of something which occurred to them as they were *taking their tay*. Here the possessive pronoun gives you to understand that they are accustomed to a luxury which in fact they taste only on very rare occasions indeed.

These are harmless peculiarities; and better than harmless. The English in such things are a more matter-of-fact people; but they are so because they consider money the sovereign good, and the pursuit of it the most honourable of all employments. In Ireland, no man is despised merely because he is poor; and, if an Irishman is vain, you will at least find nobody so merciful as he to the little vanities



of his neighbours. The English are said to be a more *respectable* people than the Irish. The reason is, that their country is one vast bazaar, where the inhabitants are devoted to the acquisition of wealth by buying and selling, where the virtues are business habits, and the respectability a fortune, or the steady regular attempt to obtain it. The Irish, on the other hand, do not consider that they were sent into the world, like journeymen into a manufactory, for the purpose of producing as much as possible. With them life has other avocations, quite as important. They value money for the amount of pleasure it will bring ; and if they do sometimes snatch at the pleasure before they earn it, this is surely not worse than the opposite folly of refusing to enjoy what really is earned.

The systems, when pursued in extreme, are both bad. In England, with a fair proportion of all the higher virtues, we find more sordid meanness, and contraction of mind, than any where else in the world. In Ireland, the opposite plan has as great a tendency to debase, although not in the same way, the national character. The poor, especially if they have a taste for pleasure, are never independent ; and the word independence comprehends all the virtues. But, if the London shopkeeper, who has realized a fortune, and yet stands at his desk from morning till night, imagine that I mean independence like his, he is grossly mistaken. He independent ! He is no more so than if he were

nailed by the ear to his own counter like a base shilling.

Irish vanity is not a cold, hard, selfish feeling. It is willing to live and let live. It does not raise itself up at the expense of others, and stand aloof, with eyes half shut, and the corners of the mouth dropped, scowling a smile at Inferiority. The ladies before mentioned, who talk of "taking their tay," do so boldly, without the risk of a sneer. If as much tolerance were exhibited in matters of religion as of vanity, Ireland would be almost happy in the midst of starvation. The cause of the tolerance is, that the vanity is not of an exclusive nature. A Scot prides himself on his ancestry, on his education, on his estate, on something that is *his* : an Irishman exalts himself through his friends and acquaintances. They are all persons of fortune, or fame, or honour ; they keep a carriage, they give elegant parties ; if women, they are beautiful or fashionable ; if men, brave, or at least a good shot. The geese in Ireland are all swans.

Now, unhappily, this conventional tolerance does not extend beyond "that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland." Beyond the geographical limit, the habitual exaggeration of vanity is termed falsehood ; and the cool, easy, self-assured manner of the narrator, is stigmatized as impudence. An Irishman feels at home every where, precisely because he was brought up to this feeling ; and the Englishman, who is never at home but when his

legs are under his own mahogany, stares at him like a bullock, and wonders what the forward fellow means.

But it will be considered that I am now speaking of the Irishman of the stage, and of the novel ; or, in other words, of that part of the Irish character which attracts most our attention, because it goes most against the grain of our prejudices. There is, in reality, as much diversity of character in Ireland as in England ; and I shall now endeavour to lay down a few of the shades that are broadest and deepest. I do not here talk of the Irish and the Anglo-Irish ; for that distinction I hold to have been long ago obliterated. I talk of the average Irishman ; and I pick him up from no province in particular, but from the whole island. And first—

#### OF THE IRISH GENTLEMAN.

This species is extremely rare ; for it would be absurd to count as Irishmen the children of absentees, who are brought up to think of their country merely as the place whence their father draws his revenue. But the real Irish Gentleman, when found, is well worth the trouble you may have expended in finding him. He is not a mere walking gentleman. He is full of character ; and is, in fact, a sort of highly refined extract of the Irish-man. He is as polite as a Frenchman of the



old school ; but it is not the politeness of manner, but of heart : and this is the secret of his success with the ladies. He is cool and self-possessed, but not grave and apathetic, like the English Gentleman. The latter qualities are respectable in a Red Indian, for in him they are associated with ideas of majesty and endurance ; but the stoicism with which Mr. Smith enters a drawing-room, and the heroic calmness with which he levels his opera-glass at the stage, are irresistibly ludicrous. They remind one of the tragic air of a monkey cracking nuts. However, Mr. Smith is satisfied with the admiration of American travellers (who ought to know something of the Indian character) ; and so the little master Smiths have nothing to fear from the strictures of a vulgarian like me.

It would be difficult for the Irish Gentleman to acquire this apathy of manner. The laws of good breeding are only just sufficient to keep within reasonable bounds the natural elasticity of his temperament ; and thus he hits unconsciously the precise point between gravity and sprightliness, beyond which on one side is frivolity, and on the other dulness.

The Irish Gentleman is fond of his country, but he makes no parade of it. If a defender is wanted, he is ready ; but he has the good taste to feel that the condition in which Ireland has been so long placed, gives a man no warrant to say lightly, or flauntingly, "I am an Irishman." Out of Ireland



his pleasurable associations are all connected with the continent. It was there he received a part of his education ; he speaks French like a native ; he is a cousin of that foreign Irisher, the well known Count Devilskimbo O'Shaughnessy. He is partial to claret, not because it is foreign, but because it was the favorite drink of his ancestors, in those golden days, when claret was the only wine they could afford to drink. He no longer indulges to excess ; or if he does so, on any extraordinary occasion, he carries his wine better than formerly, and eschews a row. When he quarrels, it is in cold blood, and in a gentlemanly way ; but being a man of courage, and a good shot, this is not half so often as people imagine.

The Irish Gentleman will by and by become more common in Ireland. At present many individuals of the species are scattered abroad upon the continent, serving in foreign armies, or otherwise incorporating themselves with foreign nations.

#### OF THE IRISH JONTLEMAN.

The Irish Jontleman belongs to no station in particular, but is found in all classes, from the nobility downwards. His portrait has been painted by Miss Edgeworth and Lady Morgan ; but the female pencil is too delicate in its touch to give

features like his in their natural breadth and vulgarity. He has been exhibited also on the stage ; but there a cloak of rude generosity is always thrown round him, to conceal those defects without which there can be no likeness.

In Ireland, I have said, the vanity of one man is dovetailed into that of his neighbours, the result of which is an easy confidence of manner ; but the Irish Jontleman stands out in bold relief from the plain surface of society. He is not vain, but impudent ; and in this respect, he is the cause of half the prejudices which exist against his nation ; for he thrusts himself forward as *the* Irishman. His brogue is more than Irish, for he cultivates it with great industry. He is not an exaggerator, but a liar ; he is not gay, but boisterous ; he is not convivial, but drunken.

He is a great duellist. You never enter his house but you find him cleaning his pistols, or hammering his flints. On the most careful calculation I have been able to make, there are three hundred and sixty-five duels per annum fought in all Ireland ; and of these three hundred and sixty are fought by the Irish Jontleman. Notwithstanding this, he is never killed, or even wounded ; the explanation of which is, that he always takes care to fight with a jontleman like himself. The remaining five duels are fought by men of honour under the usual circumstances, and are frequently accommodated in the usual way. In Ireland,

although the number of such conflicts is so immense as compared with England or Scotland, there is not a drop more blood expended.

The Irish Jontleman is a bully, and yet is not absolutely a coward. To serve a friend (that is to say, the person who hires him with money, or drink, or the loan of a horse, or the run of the larder), he will at any time run the risk of being kicked or horsewhipped. He is not a mere bully, however: he is also a flatterer, and a sycophant, and will fawn and crouch like a spaniel.

The Irish Jontleman stands in special awe of the Irish Gentleman. They are in every respect the opposites of each other; and for this reason you will seldom or never meet with them in the same company. The breed of the Irish Gentleman, I have said, grows more common in Ireland; the consequence of which is, that the Irish Jontleman begins already to make himself scarce. A change, besides, fatal to the latter, has taken place in the manners of society. At table there is more gaiety and less drunkenness, and people are now unwilling to put up with coarseness and vulgarity for the sake of a good song, or a humorous story. The ladies too, finding the Gentleman more comestable, turn away from the other with disdain; so that by and by, instead of meeting him as heretofore in the best houses, you will have to inquire in the low taverns and whisky cabins, for the Irish Jontleman.



## OF THE IRISH LADY.

The Irish Lady is the sister of the Irish Gentleman, and is one of the most fascinating women in the world. She has a lofty brow, fine eyes, and a face altogether more intellectual than that of the English Lady: but she has less dignity. In her manner she resembles more the French Lady, and is quite as amusing and conversible; but her coquetry has nothing of the heartlessness which confines the fascination of a French beauty to the moment when her eyes are fixed upon yours.

The Irish Lady has a touch of the enthusiasm of her country, which betrays itself in her whole character. She is either a rake or a devotee—for she scorns a medium. If a devotee, you will know her by a grave, not to say sad expression of countenance; and as this is not the true characteristic of devotional feeling, you perceive that she is struggling with the native archness of her disposition—which notwithstanding breaks out now and then in a sudden gleam from her deep bright eye. At such moments you turn a saint yourself, and acknowledge in its full power the beauty of holiness.

If a rake, her face is pale and haggard, for she rakes to excess. She takes to dissipation as men do to drinking. The idea of a quiet solitary evening is frightful to her imagination; she looks



about for amusement with feverish anxiety, and bends down her spirit to the level of companions far inferior to that for which nature intended her. The intellectual powers, therefore, of the Irish Lady rarely receive fair play. In the country, more especially, her mind labours under a want of books. Few families of any nation are wealthy enough to purchase or keep up a sufficing library, and there are only two or three towns in all Ireland in which there is a public one. I am far from denying, however, that there is a good proportion of well informed women in Ireland—but there ought to be more.

Instead of the national brogue, the Irish Lady has a certain *buoyancy of accent* which distinguishes her from all other women. This is the finer part of the Irish character manifested in sound. This accent gives point to the most common-place saying, and adds brilliancy to wit. To describe a thing so slight, so ethereal, is impossible; but any one who has enjoyed the conversation of an Irish lady of high rank in London, celebrated for her beauty and literary talents, must have felt what it is.

Even setting the Irish Lady, par excellence, out of the question, there is a great deal of character about female society in Ireland; and this is owing to the natural talent and liveliness of the people. We see there very little of the mawkishness which so often overspreads an English party; and are tempted more frequently to distinguish

the individuals than satisfied to class them by that insipid, silly, no-meaning designation—*young ladies*.

#### OF THE IRISH LEEDY.

The Irish Leedy is of the same family as the Irish Jontleman, but is a much more amiable person. The grand object of her ambition is to pass for the Irish Lady; and this, while it shows much pretension, shows also much taste. She gets rid of her brogue by the rule of contrary: that is to say, instead of substituting, like her mother before her, the open sound of *a* for that of double *e*, she turns every thing into double *e*. The word lady is with her leedy, and she will run after her sister Grace, calling, “Greasy, greasy!” Her accent, however, remains unaltered, notwithstanding this metamorphosis in her pronunciation, and the jumble is splendid! All her attempts to ladyfy herself are of the same nature; her “vaulting ambition o’erleaps itself, and falls on the other side;” she is a lady by the rule of contrary.

Sometimes she tries to do the sentimental, but spoils all with a laugh, that bursts out of her eyes in light and water. Chiding the rudeness of her lover, she complains sighingly of her feminine weakness; but presently, falling into the sentiment of the old song, cries,

“Och, what the divvle are you at?—begone, you naughty man!”—

and maybe hits him a slap on the face. She is much given to laughing, but is also an excellent weeper ; and, by the same token, her *kit* consists chiefly of pocket-handkerchiefs. She is “fond of the army,” and makes an excellent soldier’s wife. In society, she is nothing more than a vulgar Irishwoman, ill dressed in fashionable clothes, boisterously sentimental, full of affectation and high spirits, and with a touch of generosity in her nature withal which makes one sorry to laugh at her.

### CHAPTER III.

Black Dog Prison—Story of the Spectre Pig—Dublin Castle—Birmingham Tower—Romance of Irish History—First Earl of Westmeath—Adventures of Red Hugh O'Donnel—Historical Taint in the Irish Character.

THE Black Dog Prison, which stood in Corn Market, has been removed in our own day; but the remembrance will long endure of a strange, not to say awful secret connected with it, of which the hero was a Black Pig.

The sentry was at his post one night, just under the condemned cell, whence a voice issued, calling him by his name.

“Mick!” said the voice; “Hist! Is it yourself, Mick?”

“Humph!” replied the sentry, angrily and disdainfully, as he turned away, and marched to the extent of the few paces allotted for his walk.

“Is it Mick that is after humphing,” continued the voice piteously, “when a friend begs of him, on



the bare knees of his spirit, for nothing more than a rope to hang himself with ?”

“Sure you will get that in the morning,” said the sentry roughly ; “and that is no great stretch for your patience. But be easy now, you unfortunate creature, and in the name of the saints hold your tongue ; for your voice comes upon me like a cold ramrod going down my back, and making me grow and shrink all over. A woman !—and she your sweetheart !”

“Don’t speak of that now !”—cried the other hastily—“Sure, was’nt there enough said about it at the trial ? I did the deed, and it cannot be undone. There is no use in talking to you about provocation, or hastiness of spirit, or the sudden voice of the tempter in my ear. She is dead, and there is an end ; and whether by murder or manslaughter, I care not. All I want now is to die myself.”

“Wait, then,” replied the sentry ; “wait till the blessed sun is in the heavens, and your fellow-men, ashamed of letting such a wretch be seen, will thrust you, with cries of execration, out of the world.”

“It is that which I dread,” said the prisoner, in a voice of terror : “To be drawn slowly through the streets in a cart ! To stand alone among the multitude on Gallows Green, and to feel that every eye is fixed upon mine with hate, horror, and disdain ! What is death ; what is hell itself to this ?

Blood for blood—is not that enough? Will you not be satisfied with my life? Will you turn me out into that dreadful crowd, where there is a separate and individual death in every glance of every eye, and so kill me ten thousand times instead of once?”

“Go, pray,” said the sentry, in agitation; “go, pray; think of your guilt; wash your black spirit in her blood”——

“My curse upon your head, Mick Carolan!”—the prisoner almost screamed—“The curse of a dying man upon you and yours, for ever! If I had begged for escape; for a word of comfort; or a drop of water”——

“Hold!” cried the sentry, trembling—“For the love of the Saviour, do not curse me, Olocher!”

“I have! I do! And that same black spirit you have spurned shall haunt you every night of your miserable life!”

“Take it off; take it off, and I will obey you! There; there is a rope”—and he threw one up to the window, which the prisoner clutching eagerly drew in through the bars—“and now release me from your curse; and may the Lord have mercy on your guilty soul!” He looked up to the window, and listened for the word of relief; but, instead, a dull, heavy sound fell upon his ear; and then all was silent. The hair bristled upon Carolan’s head as he gazed; for a black object swung behind the bars like the pendulum of a clock, and he knew

that the prisoner had died, leaving the curse upon his head.

When Carolan was relieved from duty, he reeled homewards as if he had come from the whiskey cabin rather than the sentry-box. On entering the open space called Hell, an adventure befell him at which he would have laughed at any other time; but, on the present occasion, it added greatly to the superstitious gloom which had fallen upon his spirit. A black pig ran between his legs, and threw him down! The soldier, who would have marched up to an enemy's battery without flinching, lay, for several minutes, upon the ground, sweating and praying, and listening to the devilish cries of the animal, as it trotted up the street towards the prison. He at length reached his lodgings.

The next day a mighty multitude was assembled in Gallows Green, for the trial had excited universal interest. Many there were who had all along maintained that the unfortunate victim of the law had been guilty only of a hasty, thoughtless blow, which might be amply punished by a few weeks imprisonment; and now that they were at the foot of the scaffold to witness his terrible fate, few seemed disposed to criticise this favourable view of the case. It was but yesterday the mob thirsted for the prisoner's blood; and now that it was offered to them, they seemed to turn away with horror and compassion. Stories ran from mouth to mouth of



his bravery, his generosity, his high sense of honour; and even the women, against whose sex the outrage had been perpetrated, melted into tears as they told that he was one of the handsomest boys in the province of Leinster.

It may be conceived with what feelings Carolan, who was on duty keeping the ground, listened to all this. He was himself, indeed, in some degree, an object of public curiosity; for it was remembered, that the prisoner and he had been intimate friends, and his pale cheek, wandering eye, and disturbed manner, were interpreted as evidences of his guilt. A shout at length arose from the farther end of the Green. It resembled a shout of triumph; and those near the scaffold broke into murmurs of indignation at the thoughtlessness of their fellow-citizens, in thus receiving what was, no doubt, the procession of the Condemned. The shout approached, however, echoed from lip to lip; and, at length, the words resounded throughout the whole space—‘A reprieve has arrived by express!’

A general rush was now made towards the prison, the troops in their quick march almost confounded with the crowd. All were anxious to see the prisoner come forth again, a free man, into the world; and, had it not been for a strong guard assembled round the door, it is thought that the sanctuary of the law itself would have been invaded. A very different spectacle, however, was presented to public curiosity. At the moment the multitude



arrived, the jailer was delivering up to his friends the body of the suicide, stiff, stark, and discoloured! It was observed by his comrades as a remarkable circumstance, that neither the news of the reprieve, nor the sight of the dead body, produced any change upon the pale cheek, wandering eye, and disturbed manner of Carolan.

In the conversation of the soldiers that day, and even of the citizens, there appeared a curious association of ideas. The self-murder took place about midnight; about midnight the guard was relieved; and, about midnight, Carolan, on his way home, was thrown down by a black pig. If you add to this the strange manner of the sentry, it will not appear surprising that a mysterious connexion appeared to exist throughout. The man who was that night to keep watch under the window of the condemned cell did not seem to like his duty. He looked at Carolan askance; listened eagerly, yet without remark, to the story of the black pig; and, at length, betook himself to his inevitable task with an expression of countenance which was afterwards remembered. When the guard was relieved, he was found lying upon the ground at his post, speechless and apparently dead. He had sustained a paralytic stroke, occasioned, as he declared, by an apparition in the form of a *black pig*.

On the next night, the guard was called out by the cries of the sentry—on the next—on the next! The whole neighbourhood was alarmed. Soldiers

and citizens avowed alike that the place was haunted, and the unholy shape was in every case the same—that of a black pig.

It will not be thought surprising that a prejudice—no one knew how or why—should have arisen among his comrades against Carolan. This, at length, went so far that he was, to all intents and purposes, sent to Coventry.

“What I have done,” said he to his young wife, “is no doubt a heavy crime ; but it is a heavier misfortune. I cannot stay in the army, and I have no other trade. What is to become of us ? Sure if it was the unfortunate creature’s ghost who tumbled me down in Hell, it would have appeared to me afterwards, and not have employed itself, night after night, in frightening the innocent neighbours for nothing at all at all !”

“O, never mind you !” replied the wife : “whether in the army or not, we must live ; and, as for the Black Pig, you have spoken too soon, my dear, for, my life upon it, you see him again !”

“Now, the Lord forbid !” said Carolan ; “but what put that same into your head ?”

“It was a dream I was after having last night”—But our story deals enough in the superstitious, and we shall leave out Mrs. Carolan’s dream.

The next night the time had come round, and it was again Carolan’s duty to stand sentry under the window of the condemned cell of the Black Dog Prison. When he went out of the guard-house for

this purpose, all eyes were bent upon him in curiosity. It was debated, after he had gone, whether or not the guard should turn out in answer to his expected cries. No decision, however, was come to; but they sat up in arms the whole night. Once they heard something. It was when the bells of the city struck one; and the sound resembled a prodigious grunt, softened by distance till it became a hollow roar. But this was neither accompanied, nor followed, by the sentry's voice; and even those who had voted for turning out, agreed in the propriety of sitting still. The time passed on, and still they received no summons! What could this mean? Of all living men, they had imagined that Carolan was the least likely to escape the supernatural visit; and, at the proper hour, the relief went their rounds, accompanied by a body of volunteers at least twenty times stronger.

The night was dark; but Carolan they could see was at his post, standing as erect as a pike-staff, and they began the ceremony of changing guard with some trepidation. The sentry, however, did not answer.

“By the powers, he is dead!” cried they; and they touched the stiff figure, which they found to be the musket of the unhappy man, with the bayonet fixed, and dressed cap-à-piéd in the clothes of Carolan, even to his shirt! There was no longer room for doubt. The grisly apparition was, in reality, the ghost of Olocher, the felon who had



committed suicide. It had carried off the sentry, body and soul ; and from that night it was known to the citizens of Dublin—who had long reason to know it well—by the name of the Dolocher.

The whole town was alarmed ; but the vengeance of the apparition, it seemed, was yet not slackened on poor Carolan. His widow went before the magistrates on the following day, and made oath that she had met the Dolocher in Christ Church lane (a street leading from Hell), where it had attacked, and attempted to bite her ; and that, in her terror, she had left her cloak entangled in its tusks. No sooner was her complaint done, than another, and another, and another woman came forward with a story of a similar kind. The alarm continued. Night after night some new outrage was perpetrated by the Dolocher ; and always his victim was of that sex which, in his mortal form, had brought him to misery and death.

The citizens were unjust—and no wonder—in their rage and terror, for they declared war to the knife against the whole race of pigs. A society was formed for the express purpose of extirminating them ; and, issuing at night for their meeting-house, a whisky shop in Cook Street, armed with weapons of all descriptions, they began the campaign with such energy that the kennels ran blood. Nor was the municipal government behind hand. They issued a proclamation calling upon every man to take care of his own pig, and commanded the



bailiffs to go round at night with their pikes, and slaughter every individual of the swinish multitude that was found at liberty. This turned out to be a true benefit to the town, although not in the way that was expected ; for the streets at that time were so infested with pigs that the nuisance had become intolerable. On the night in question the bailiffs did their duty zealously. Nothing was heard from one end of the city to the other but grunting, and squeaking, and squalling ; and before daylight they left the field of their prowess encumbered with slain.

The next morning, when carts were sent round to collect the dead bodies—not one was to be found ! The slaughter, however, had its use ; for although the Dolocher had not been destroyed, it was satiated with blood ; for it appeared no more again that winter.

The lonely widow of Carolan, in the mean time, was wooed by a blacksmith of a neighbouring village, and the man would take no denial. It was in vain for her to urge her grief for her husband's fate, and even to threaten him with the vengeance of the enemy of her house, the Dolocher. The blacksmith was enamoured ; and after every repulse he came again and again, for he had a good opinion of himself as well as of the widow, and could not conceive that any woman in her senses would refuse him seriously. Norah was bothered ; for the neighbours at last began to jeer her about the

blacksmith—who was an unexceptionable match—and ask her whether she was keeping herself for the Black Pig? This went on for a whole year, and the very memory of the above events had passed away, when all on a sudden, just as the winter had set in, the Dolocher re-appeared!

A young woman who was passing along the Wood Quay, was stopped at Fisher's Alley, and pulled into the shade by the brute, with whom she left her cloak and a bundle, as she fled in terror. This was the commencement of the campaign, and every night some new outrage—always committed on the beautiful sex—struck alarm into the breasts of the citizens of Dublin.

“You see,” said Norah to the pertinacious blacksmith, “you see this business is not at an end as you expected. Do you think, foolish man, the Dolocher would have more respect to the second husband than the first?”

“Is it respect?” replied the blacksmith—“Och, by my soul, it is I who will teach him that thing! Only let me get these two fists, one at each side of his head, and I'll make him wish himself between the hammer and the anvil. Did you ever hear of the cowardly beast laying hands on a *man*?”

“That is because his vengeance is vowed against woman. But if a man dared to offend him”—

“Then, thunder and turf, I'll dare any how!”

“Is it daring you call it,” said Norah, with spite, “to go round two miles from his beat? I never

hear of *you* traversing Hell after bedtime—or Wood Quay—or ”—

“Then by the powers, I’ll go now ”—

“No, not to-night, for it is now too early. But to-morrow night, at the dead hour of twelve, pass the end of Fisher’s Alley ; and, turning your head, shout your summons to him as you go by.”

“And what if I leather him outright ?”

“If you do *not*, never come here again, or I will set all the women in the street to pin a dishclout to your coat tails !”

“But what if I do ?”

“Then we’ll talk about it,” said the widow, with a smile and a sigh, as she hung down her head.

The blacksmith took his leave ; but before returning to his village he called upon a friend, and then upon another, and another—always, of course, doing the civil thing with regard to the whiskey bottle, till it was far in the night. By the powers, thought he, this is just the hour for the job ! Wont to-night do as well as to-morrow ?—aye, and better to boot ; for to-morrow a smack upon Norah’s lips, just in token of consent, will be sweeter than a dozen thwacks upon the skin of an old pig ! It rained water-spouts as he was coming out of the last house, and his friend’s wife insisted upon wrapping her cloak about him.

“Then give me the bonnet, too,” said the blacksmith, who was just in the mood for fun, “and maybe the Pig will take me for one of his sweet-



hearts !” He was accordingly accommodated with an old black beaver bonnet ; and in this guise he set out upon the adventure.

The night was dark ; the streets were deserted ; and nothing was heard but the heavy splash of the rain upon the stones. The blacksmith at first pushed lustily along, humming a brisk air, and slapping the walls with his hand as he passed ; but as the whiskey lost its virtue by degrees in the cold night air, his spirits sunk to a pitch more consonant to the time and tide. He drew his bonnet over his face to keep the sharp drops from splashing in his eyes, and cowering up in his cloak, might really have seemed, in the obscurity of the hour, to be a tall woman tramping homewards through the rain.

Just as he entered Hell, he heard all on a sudden a hideous grunt close to his ear, to which he responded, in the surprise and terror of the moment, by a roar which awakened the whole neighbourhood. He was thrust against the wall before he could raise the cursed beaver from his eyes, and felt the snout and tusks of an enormous pig driven against his bosom.

“ In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost !” cried the terrified blacksmith—“ take that, ye ugly brute—and that—and that !” at every word darting his brawny fist into the chest of the Dolocher, with a force that might have felled a bullock. The phantom, accustomed only to encounters with the softer sex, and therefore



wholly unprepared for such a reception as this, rolled heels over head upon the street ; when the blacksmith, leaping with his whole weight upon his breast, sent forth such shouts of victory as brought out the inhabitants, with lanterns and pokers, from far and near.

The groaning spectre was raised upon its hind legs, and the swinish tabernacle in which it had chosen to clothe itself, fell to the ground.

“Mick Carolan !” cried the crowd, and a dozen lanterns were thrust into his face. It was indeed Mick Carolan ! He was carried to the hospital of the Black Dog Prison ; where—truth compels me to relate—he died the next day. In his confession he detailed all that has been stated above ; adding that the idea of the imposture was suggested to him and his wife by the singular train of circumstances, with which at first he had nothing to do ; and that, having resolved to leave the army, he was under the necessity of continuing the delusion as a means of support. The trifling robberies he committed from time to time upon women, were one means of raising the necessary supplies ; while, so long as the slaughter of the pigs went on, and he was able to remove the carcasses to a cellar in Schoolhouse Lane, there was no want either of pork or bacon at his table.

The Castle of Dublin now possesses only one small portion of the original Anglo-Norman edifice ;

and this is the only portion worth talking about. Birmingham Tower, formerly the state prison, and now the repository of the public records of Ireland, strikes the stranger with surprise by the contrast it presents to the tasteless tameness of the rest of the palace.

The history of Birmingham Tower would form a most interesting work. It would include the adventures, and the captivity, of the most celebrated of the Milesian chiefs, and of their rivals the Anglo-Norman lords. It was here where languished the first Earl of Westmeath, for organizing a rebellion to avenge the death of his father, whom he had seen executed in the Tower of London. The young Earl was born in that tower,

“——— England’s lasting shame,”

and on his release, entered into a conspiracy with O’Neil and O’Donnel. The two last fled beyond seas, but the Earl was seized, confined in the castle of Dublin, and condemned to die. He escaped, and reached one of the fastnesses of his family among the lakes of Cavan; where he remained in defiance of the authorities, and their offered rewards for his apprehension. All on a sudden he made his appearance at the English court, threw himself upon the mercy of the monarch, and pleaded so well by his ingenuousness, his youth, and his

manly beauty, that he was pardoned and received into favour.

But the most striking story in the Romance of Irish History, as connected with Birmingham Tower, would be that of Red Hugh O'Donnel, the son of the chief of Tyrconnell, and of "Dark Ina," a daughter of the Lord of the Isles.

The family of this young man was one of the most illustrious in Ireland, and his ancestors had frequently been addressed as independent princes by the Kings of England. The legends of his house were all well known to Red Hugh; and as he grew up to the age of fifteen or sixteen, they wrought in his brain, till the boy dreamed of winning back the honours of the O'Donnel. This was bruited abroad, and echoed by the enthusiasm of the people all over Ireland. Dublin Castle itself heard the sound, and Sir John Perrott was thrown into dismay.

Soon after, a ship loaded with Spanish wine arrived in Lough Swilly, and the surrounding clans of O'Donnel, Mac Swiney, and O'Dogherty crowded to the shore to bargain for the precious freight. The news reached the prince of the country, and the young O'Donnel arrived speedily at Mac Swiney's castle. But unfortunately he was too late. The wine intended for sale was disposed of; and all the captain could do was to invite him on board to gratify his curiosity by tasting some magnificent sack which was intended for the Lord



Deputy. Red Hugh accepted the invitation, and attended by some of his friends, repaired on board. They drank deeply; and the next morning found themselves close under hatches, and on their way, as well as the sack, to the Lord Deputy.

Red Hugh was sixteen when he entered Birmingham Tower, where it was his destiny to meditate for three years, and three months. At the end of this period he found means to escape to the Wicklow hills. The companions of his captivity and his flight here forsook him, and he was left alone with the one faithful servant to whom they all owed their release. They were now, however, at the borders of O'Toole's country, and this chief, who had some time before shared the bonds of the young O'Donnell in Dublin Castle, was his sworn friend and ally. They who are well read in Irish history—I grieve to say it, in the *historical* character of the Irish chiefs—will not be surprised that Red Hugh was betrayed by O'Toole, and placed in still harder durance in Birmingham Tower.

A second time he escaped, by the assistance of a faithful servant; and a second time found himself wandering in cold, hunger, and destitution among the romantic hills of Wicklow. This time he was not betrayed. By the assistance of O'Byrne, of Glen Malur, he escaped to Ulster, and, after many romantic adventures, reached his father's territory after an absence of five years. The old man was



by this time unfitted by years for the direction of a government which would now be at open war with the conquerors of the country; and the various septs composing the feudal subjects of the house elected Red Hugh as THE O'DONNEL.

Red Hugh turned out a famous warrior, and the fiercest enemy of the English power in Ireland. United with the great family of O'Neil, it is hard to say at what pitch of success he might not have arrived—but the Irish were never united long. The two allies quarrelled about leading an onset—and the history is told. O'Donnell was totally defeated by Lord Mountjoy at Kinsale, and fled to Spain, where he died at Valladolid in 1602, and in the thirty-first year of his age.

The Irish, I have said, were never united long; and this implies the foulest charge that history has to bring against them as a nation. In apology, or explanation, however, it may be remarked, that the island was at one time divided into various petty states, each different from the others in manners, customs, and even geographical characteristics. Hence it arose that no common feeling of patriotism existed to animate at once the whole population; and that in all the Irish wars the sacred watchword of Country was never used with any strong and consistent effect. In addition to these grand divisions, there were septs, or tribes, or names, or families in every state, all acknowledging separate chiefs, and actuated by separate interests;

but perhaps the ancient Brehon law, known by the name of Tanistry, was the most powerful agent in loosening the ties which usually bind rude societies together.

By this law—descending perhaps from the age

“When wild in woods the noble savage ran,”

it was provided that the strongest, or most accomplished, should succeed to the inheritance. It would be impossible for human ingenuity to devise a means more efficient than this for producing and perpetuating both public and private dissensions, and for obliterating all those feelings which the philosopher, when abstractedly speaking, calls prejudices, but which the reader of history must be aware are the true substitute for political virtue among a barbarous people.









#### CHAPTER IV.

The Shillelagh—Calumnies of the Newspapers against their Country—  
Bray and its Scenery—Enniskerry Beggar—The Dargle—Powers-  
court Waterfall—Summit of the Douce—Luggelaw—The Lady of  
Lough Tay.

ALL I shall say on the subject of Irish hospitality is, that I had as great difficulty in making my escape from Dublin as Red Hugh O'Donnell himself. Like him, I took my way towards the hills of Wicklow; determining to forget every thing I had heard in the city on the subject of Ireland, and to see things with my own eyes. This, in fact, is absolutely necessary; for in Dublin, there are very many clever and, generally speaking, well informed people who know far more of the interior of Africa than of that of their own country. One gentleman advised me, since I was going into the "disturbed districts," to take a pair of pistols, and another, to provide myself with a sword-stick. I adopted a

medium course. I put a shillelagh into one hand, and a very small packet of indispensables in the other, and thus prepared set forth on the adventure, with no other means of locomotion than that with which bounteous nature had provided me.

It may be proper to say here at once, in order to avoid being betrayed in a more unseasonable place, into any thing connected with newspaper politics, that in the course of my ramble, generally on foot, often through wild and lonely scenes, and when my day's walk was not unfrequently prolonged till long after nightfall, I never met with the slightest interruption myself, and never heard of any deed of violence perpetrated at the time, with the exception of one row at a *pattern*. I would not presume to say such a thing on mere suspicion ; but I feel the most absolute conviction, that one half of the stories propagated by some of the newspapers against the Irish character, are pure inventions, and that the remaining half, with the exception of occasional cases, are grossly exaggerated. If I am correct in this, we have here a fearful proof of the historical taint alluded to at the end of the last chapter, being transmitted to our own day. We have an instance, recurring several times a week, of Irishmen of education and talent being leagued together for the purpose of holding up their own countrymen to the rest of Europe as the most brutal scoundrels that ever polluted the atmosphere of the world !



*Bay of the*

*White Mountain*





As for my shillelagh (who does not see the association of ideas ?), that is not so common an article as is supposed. A shillelagh, be it known across the Irish Channel, is not simply a cudgel, but an oaken cudgel. Ireland was the land of oaks before it became the land of potatoes, and introduced, for aught I know, this noble tree into England. At all events, if the common story be true, that Westminster Hall is roofed with oak brought from the wood of Shillelagh (in the county where I am now ruminating), the Irish oak must at that time have been the more esteemed of the two. There is now very little wood of any kind in Ireland ; but the oak especially is found more frequently at the bottom of the bogs than above ground.

In approaching the town of Bray, ten miles from Dublin, with the bay on the left hand, the Wicklow “ mountains ” in front, and villas, villages, and cottages around, the sensations of the traveller must be altogether of a pleasing, and even delightful nature. The Wicklow mountains, however, are not mountains at all. They are romantic hills, and are occasionally not deficient even in majesty ; but, like the mountains of the Rhine, they must first be stripped of exaggeration before they give unalloyed satisfaction to the beholder.

The most striking from this point of view are the greater and lesser Sugarloaf, and the promontory of Brayhead. The last mentioned hill is eight hundred feet high from the level of the sea,

and is composed of masses of quartz. The summit is so broken and irregular, that almost at every step a new view appears, or the old one assumes a new aspect. At one point is a splendid sea-piece, bounded on a clear day by the Welsh mountains. From another, the imagination dives into a mysterious hollow, extending among the assembled hills, like an unroofed cavern. From another, the town of Bray is seen far below, with sundry whitewashed houses, and neat *boxes*, and one handsome hotel, proclaiming it to be the favourite summer resort of the "genteel people" of Dublin.

The Sugarloaf hills seem to haunt the steps of the traveller. They are seen from every point of view, and are sufficiently well described by their modern designation. What their ancient name was I do not know; nor can I tell why the Irish abandoned it for a word suggesting only mean and unpoetical ideas.

Bray is certainly worth a visit, if only for the sake of Brayhead, otherwise I should have had no occasion to enter the village at all. Before reaching it, or crossing the river which divides the counties of Dublin and Wicklow, the mail-coach road turns off to the right, and conducts the traveller to within a short distance of the village of Enniskerry. This is a neat and finely situated little place. The annexed view is not only poetical, but so correct in the details, that I amused myself by letting some of the inhabitants point out their own individual

houses. The one in the centre of the piece, at the right hand corner of the bridge, is the hotel, and a very good village hotel it is. The Sugarloaf mountain in the distance dominates the scene.

With regard to the population of the county, so far all was well. I had made an agreeable exchange on leaving the capital. The road to Bray was crowded with cars, and other equipages, filled with smiling faces; and in this little village the houses were good, and the people, to outward appearance, comfortable. On entering Enniskerry, I was accosted by only one beggar; and even he looked so sturdy, and so happy, that I asked him in some discontent, if it was a glass of whisky he would buy with my unwilling penny? His defence, however, was immediately undertaken by the driver of a car, who happened to be passing on his way to Dublin, and who assured me that the applicant was a sober and industrious poor man.

“How industrious?” demanded I.

“Sure, and does’nt he wait here from morning till night,” was the reply, “to see what the gentry will give him?” The Irish have odd notions with regard to begging. While tracing these lines I have been called from my writing table by an altercation without. A young Irishman, half clothed, and very little acquainted with the English language, demanded alms at the door, as the servant supposed, and could not be prevailed



upon to go without seeing "the masther." When I made my appearance, he explained that he was *not* a beggar, but a "thraveller" on his way to London, and that he wanted nothing at all at all, only just a night's lodging.

The Dargle, or Glen of the Oaks, is close to Enniskerry; and in spite of its associations with Dublin pic-nic parties, presents a very picturesque and romantic scene. It is a deep and dark glen, with a rapid stream at the bottom, impeded by rocks, shady walks on the sides for the solus cum sola, a pretty moss-house for pretty young ladies, a green bank for cold fowl and tongue, and a Lover's Leap for any body who likes. The lover's leap is a lofty shelving rock, which commands an excellent view of the more striking features of the Glen; but I have talked with those who like better the sloping bank whereon the little cottages stand which are even as Houses of Refuge to the adventurous citizen. These command a view of the entire glen, which is about a mile long.

Sunday was formerly the grand day for pic-nic parties; but, in consequence of some "depredations"—whether committed upon the oaks, rocks, or water, I could not learn—the glen is now only open on certain other days of the week. This, at any rate, will prove beneficial to the religious habits of the Dubliners; for those who are debarred from admiring the works of Creation in the glen will of course spend the Sabbath in







*Waterfall*  
1850

praising the Creator in the church. For a similar reason, doubtless, the British Museum is locked up from the people on Sunday. Surely it cannot be charged as the fault of our legislators, that the diverted flood should roll in the direction of the gin-shop rather than of the temple; and that the populace of London, who have the advantage of being guarded so jealously from the demoralizing influence of the arts and sciences, are the most drunken and disorderly populace in Europe !

The Earl of Powerscourt has another exhibition in this neighbourhood, which in my opinion is far less worthy of a visit than the Dargle. This is the Waterfall, of which a view is given in the annexed engraving, taken at the most favourable moment an artist could desire. The glen into which this stream descends, is known by the name of the Deer Park, and has nothing remarkable in itself, although the lofty hills by which it is inclosed excite strongly the curiosity of the traveller when approaching from a distance.

I have seen many famous waterfalls ; but I have never yet seen any which answered, even in a moderate degree, to its reputation. I do not know *how* it is, that even the most prosaic and matter-of-fact travellers should fall into exaggeration on this subject ; but such is the case. It has often been remarked of the Powerscourt cascade, that the water seems to descend slowly, clinging as it were to the rock ; but the same phenomenon may be



seen every where else. It is caused, I presume, by the eye mistaking the comparatively slow progress of the white bubbles for that of the water. The stream here is called the Glenisloreane; when it passes through the glen, it is joined by the Glen-cree, and assumes its name; on entering the Glen of the Oaks, it becomes the Dargle; and, on emerging, it is the Bray, under which cognomen it falls into the sea. Here I took leave of this beautiful, but unimportant little river, and, climbing the steep to the right of the waterfall, ascended the Douce mountain—hardly unworthy of the name, being nearly twenty-four hundred feet above the level of the sea.

The Douce is considerably higher than the Great Sugarloaf, and is recognizable for a wide distance round by a cairn of stones on its summit. The ascent from the glen of the waterfall is very steep; and I would hardly advise a traveller unaccustomed to mountain scenery to attempt it, as there is no resting-place—at least in the form of an inn—within any distance which he would reckon reasonable. The view, however, from the summit, which commands a great portion of the counties Wicklow and Dublin, is as interesting as a view almost wholly uninterrupted can be; and the descent towards Lough Tay is extremely agreeable.

On such a spot as the summit of the Douce, one feels a sensation of joy corresponding to the swelling of the heart in grief. It seems as if the spirit





*Lamishorey*  
*Wm. H. Miller*



*expanded* in the immensity of space around. But, with the exception of this—which speedily wears off—there is nothing, in my opinion, in the e vaunted views, of which the great extent of surface that may be travelled by the eye is the principal advantage, to compensate for the trouble of getting at them. To voyage in a balloon, after the first exulting, swelling sensation had subsided, I should imagine to be a very insipid mode of getting along. To place yourself above a grand or picturesque object, is to deprive it of the grand and picturesque. Viewed from a balloon, the ocean in the most magnificent storm imaginable, would be tameness itself; and, from the summit of the Douce, the *small mountains* of Wicklow, with the exception, perhaps, of Lugnagilla herself—become commonplace and uninteresting.

On the south, or south-west, there lay before me, far down the slope of the mountain, a vale without a single feature of interest, if it was not a general wildness and loneliness, corresponding with the character of the desert heath between. This I knew by the description in the Guide Book\* to be Luggelaw, and I was therefore prepared for an agreeable surprise; yet, on arriving suddenly at the spot whence a view is obtained of Lough Tay,

\* Guide to the County Wicklow. An extremely well-written little volume, and very correct, excepting a *leetle* exaggeration touching beauty, grandeur, sublimity, &c.



slumbering at the bottom, in the embrace of her stern and lofty hills, I was but little the better for having been prepared.

This is truly a scene of *enchantment*; for the suddenness with which a lovely lake, as smooth and bright as molten silver, and fringed with luxuriant foliage, is thrown before the eye in the midst of wild and dreary hills of heath and granite, appears absolutely preternatural. A wonderfully perfect idea of the spot is conveyed in the engraving. The lake fills upwards of seventy acres of the vale; and beyond this are lawns and plantations, with a white house half visible among the trees. It is *not* the abode of St. Kevin; for, although it was here he intended to build his Seven Churches, the persecution of the love-lorn Kathleen drove him—unhappily for her!—to the Valley of the Two Lakes. It is the property of Mr. Latouche, the banker, of Dublin.

On the shores of Lough Tay, however, I fell into a mistake quite as absurd as that of confounding St. Kevin and Mr. Latouche. I was standing on a projecting rock, in the very wildest niche of the lake, with the bright water spread before me, and a natural grove of larch, birch, and other northern trees behind, affording peeps through the branches of the heather mountain by which I had descended. On the opposite shore was a precipice of granite, broken into a thousand fantastic forms; and the beautiful expanse of water extended to the left till it was lost



in the indentations of the valley. The hour was sunset ; and it may be that the indistinctness of the objects may have added to the illusion—but I traced in the scene before me the well-known description, line for line, of that now classic lake, in “ mine own romantic land.” Nay, I was myself the adventurous huntsman, who climbed,

“ With footing nice,  
 A far projecting precipice.  
 The broom’s tough roots his ladder made,  
 The hazel saplings lent their aid ;  
 And thus an airy point is won,  
 When, gleaming with the setting sun,  
 One burnished sheet of living gold,  
 Loch Katrine lay beneath him rolled,  
 In all her length far winding lay,  
 With promontory, creek, and bay,  
 \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*  
 And mountains that, like giants, stand  
 To sentinel enchanted land,  
 High on the south, huge Ben-venue  
 Down in the lake in masses threw  
 Crag, knolls, and mounds ; confus’dly hurled ;  
 The fragments of an earlier world !  
 A wildering forest feathered o’er  
 His ruined sides and summits hoar.  
 While on the north, through middle air,  
 Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.”

These lines I repeated aloud ; and mark the result :—

“ When, lo ! forth starting at the sound,  
 From underneath an aged oak,  
 That slanted from the islet rock,

A damsel guider of its way,  
A little skiff shot to the bay,  
That round the promontory steep  
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,  
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,  
The weeping willow-twigg to lave,  
And kiss, with whispering sound, and slow,  
The beach of pebbles, bright as snow.  
The boat had touched this silver strand  
Just as the hunter left his stand,  
And stood concealed amid the brake,  
To view this Lady of the Lake !”

Now, taking all things into consideration—the time, the hour, the poetical associations—I do maintain, that I was guilty of no puppyism in pulling off my hat to this “fay in fairy land ;” and exclaiming, in a voice of earnest enthusiasm :—“ Is it possible that I behold Ellen Douglas ?”

“ No, Sir ;” replied the damsel, with a start of surprise—“ My name is Jenkinson.”

I scrambled from my promontory as speedily as possible ; and, passing a party of ladies and gentlemen, some of whom had English voices, took my way along the dusky hills towards Roundwood.

## CHAPTER V.

The Jew's Harp—The Harp of Brian Boro—History of the Irish Minstrel—Sanctity of the Order—Dress—Story of Carol O'Daly and Eileen a Roon—Fidelity of a feudal Bard—Superstition connected with the Harp—Cry of the Benshi—Bards and Poetry in the time of Spenser—Manners as described in *Campion*—Decline and fall of the Bards.

It was almost dark before I reached the Roundwood road ; and this was in part the fault of a harp whose plaintive tones allured me into a cottage. In the annexed engraving the reader will see both harp and harper, the latter a young peasant girl, and the former an instrument composed of iron, with a steel tongue, and about two inches long, by an inch and a half at the greatest breadth. This may be said to be now the only musical instrument of the Irish peasant, and it exemplifies in a striking manner the degradation of his country.

As a contrast to the above brief description of

the modern instrument (vulgo, a Jew's Harp), I am tempted to extract from the *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, an account of the famous harp of Brian Boriomh, or as the name is now usually written, Brian Boro.

“This harp is thirty-two inches high, and of extraordinary good workmanship. The sounding-board is of oak, the arms of red sally: the extremity of the uppermost arm in front is capped with silver, extremely well wrought and chiselled. It contains a large crystal set in silver, and under it was another stone now lost. The buttons or ornamental knobs at the sides of that arm are of silver. On the front arm are the arms of the O'Brian family chased in silver; viz. the Bloody Hand, supported by Lions. On the sides of the front arm, within two circles, are two Irish wolf dogs cut in the wood. The holes of the sounding-boards, where the strings entered, are neatly ornamented with scutcheons of brass carved and gilt: the larger sounding-holes were ornamented probably with silver, as they have been the object of theft. This harp has twenty-eight keys, and as many string-holes, consequently there was the same number of strings. The foot-piece, or rest, is broken off, and the parts to which it was joined are very rotten.”

The story concerning this harp—with the authenticity of which I have nothing to do—is, that it was laid at the feet of the Pope by Donogh,



the chief King of Ireland, who went to Rome in the year 1064, for the remission of his sins. In the reign of Henry VIII. the Pope sent it to the King, but kept the golden crown which had accompanied it, and Henry, caring no more than the holy father for a harp, gave it away to the Marquis of Clanricarde; from whom it passed into various other hands, landing at last in Trinity College Museum.

If the harp of Ireland has dwindled into a Jew's harp, it is no wonder that the Irish minstrel should be represented in these latter days by a blind fiddler, groping his way to fair and pattern, and receiving payment for his music as he passes along in potatoes. The time is past when the Milesian princes strove for the possession of a bard, and could only accommodate the friendly contest by casting lots! Before the Christian era, if we are to believe the Irish historians, in their report of the sumptuary laws, the bards must have ranked highest of subjects, as they were permitted to wear six colours, while the nobility were limited to five.

In the sixth century, we know with more certainty, that they formed an order almost as sacred as that of the Brahmins, and that they went through a certain routine of education in appointed colleges. Their dress at this period, according to Walker, was very striking. Their tunic, striped in several colours, were of weft, covering thighs, legs, and feet, and fitted almost as close as the skin. Over this descended to the

mid-thigh, a loose frock of plaided stuff, or yellow linen, ornamented with needlework, and drawn in, and fastened at the waist by a girdle. Sometimes the sleeves of this garment were long, and sometimes short, displaying the naked arms. It was cut round the bosom, so as to show the upper part of the shoulders and throat. A long, fringed cloak descended over all to the ancles, with its richly ornamented hood hanging behind. The beard was uncut, and the hair, escaping from the *barrad*, or conical cap (whence some writers deduce the word *bard*), fell in masses upon the shoulders.

Imagine a figure like this gliding, as I am now, over the dusky hills of Wicklow, with a harp, resembling in form that of Brian Boro, slung upon his shoulder! Yonder hut is a baronial residence, and its small glimmering taper a blaze of light from the windows, serving as a beacon to guide, and attract, the wanderers of the night. As the bard reaches the gate, a shout of welcome hails his arrival; and as he paces up the banquetting hall, a hundred beautiful eyes “rain influence” on the child of song.

But hold!—his cheek is pale, his manner is disturbed; he does not look like one accustomed to strike the lofty lyre in the confidence of obtaining at will the tears or smiles of the listeners. His wandering eye at length fixes, and she on whom the glance is bent with difficulty restrains a scream of surprise and joy. The young lady,

whose name is Ellen Kavanagh, is the star of the night; it is in honour of her nuptials, which are to take place to-morrow, that the party are assembled; and every heart in the room bounds with joy—except those of the bride and the minstrel. In a long absence of her lover, Ellen had been persuaded of his falsehood, and at length had consented to give up a reluctant hand to the solicitations of another, backed by the commands and entreaties of her family.

The harper begins his lay at the request of the master of the feast. It is an air which he had composed in a moment of deep feeling, on a wild and lonely part of the seashore, to which he had fled to hide his grief and his despair. A ray of hope, however, mingles with the song. It tells of enduring love, pours out the most passionate protestations, and at length demands—while the voice of the poet lingers tremblingly on the line—“Wilt thou stay, or come with me, Eileen a Roon?” A murmur of applause follows the stanza; in the midst of which a low voice, unheard by all save one, whispers, “I will go with thee!” At the moment a crash of music shakes the room, as the fingers of the bard sweep the quivering strings, and his voice breaks into the *Cead mille failte*—“a hundred thousand welcomes,” which to this day glows in the heart, eyes, and lips of his countrymen—



A hundred thousand welcomes,  
   Eileen a Roon !  
 A hundred thousand welcomes,  
   Eileen a Roon !  
 Oh, welcome ever more,  
 With welcomes yet in store,  
 Till love and life are o'er,  
   Eileen a Roon !

This bard is no other than Carol O'Daly, a gentleman of fortune and high accomplishments ; and his song, composed and sung under the above circumstances, and said to have been enthusiastically admired by Handel, is the Robin Adair claimed by the Scots. Moore, gifted as he is, could not have *felt* this air when he wrote his artificial stanzas.

The lives of the bards were as sacred among the Irish as among the ancient Greeks. It is said, that, in the fourth century, a King of Leinster killed his enemy's bard in an engagement, for which he was stigmatized by the word "Cin-sealach !" — foul or disgraceful head ; a name which descended to his posterity. So, in the Odyssey :—

"O King, to mercy be thy soul inclined,  
 And spare the poets' ever gentle kind :  
 A deed like this thy future fame would wrong,  
 For dear to gods and men is sacred song."

On another occasion the bard was spared, and dearly to the cost of the clement warrior. A Kerry



chief had won a lady in a duel, and carried home his beautiful bride to his castle. She, however, retained a lurking attachment for the vanquished rival; who, one night, through her connivance, surprised the stronghold, and put all to the sword but herself, and the "sacred bard." The latter followed the steps of the lovers to the palace of Mac Nessa, King of Munster; and was one day in attendance when the court were walking on a lofty promontory to enjoy the prospect. The lady lingered for an instant behind the rest, to look down the dreadful steep, where it overhung the sea. It may be, that, at that moment, the vacant space was filled up before her mind's eye by the scene of the massacre; and that the death-cry of her husband arose from the abyss upon her ear. She started, however, as the bard approached; his face clothed in smiles, and his tongue in adulation.

"Give me your hand," said she; "and lead me away. Methinks there is a strange fascination in this spot."

"It is that of the mermen below," replied the courtly bard; "who are struck with your surpassing beauty, and would fain lure you into their caves."

"They shall be disappointed, then; for I go to rejoin my husband."

"Thou shalt, indeed!" said the bard suddenly, as he caught her up in his arms. A wild scream

from the lady's lips alarmed her companions, and the whole court rushed to the spot.

“Traitress!—murderess!” said the bard, stepping deliberately to the brink—“we indeed go to rejoin thy husband; thou to receive the punishment of thy crime, and I the reward of my fidelity!” and, leaping over the precipice, he plunged with her into the gulf.

Not only was the person of the bard held sacred, but a superstitious reverence attached even to his instrument. Some harps, even when untouched by human fingers, emitted mournful sounds on the death of a chief. This “cry of the Benshi” was, no doubt, the effect of the wind; for it was the custom of the Irish, as well as of the Hebrew bards, to loosen the strings of their harp when they were in grief, and hang it up neglected upon the trees. Other natural sounds were enlisted to the same purpose, either by the cunning of the poet, or the superstition of the people; and both on the Irish and Scottish mountains, the “hollow moan,” which heralds the tempest, has frequently seemed an unearthly voice announcing defeat and disaster.

“Along the woods, along the moorish fens,  
Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm;  
And up among the loose, disjointed cliffs,  
And fractured mountains wild, the brawling brook,  
And cave, presageful, send a hollow moan,  
Resounding long in listening Fancy's ear.”

It is remarked, that the music of the Irish lost its sprightly character after the English conquest ; and this is attributed to the sorrowful and indignant feelings of the people. What these romantic feelings were among the bards at the time of the Conquest, is described by Spenser.

“Of a most notorious thief and outlaw, which had lived all his lifetime upon spoils and robberies, one of their bards in his praise will say, that he was not one of the idle milksops that was brought up by the fire-side ; and that most of his days he spent in arms and valiant enterprises : that he did never cut his meat before he had won it with the sword : that he lay not all night slugging in a cabin under his mantle ; but used commonly to keep others waking to defend their lives ; and did light his candle at the flames of their houses to lead him in the darkness : that the day was his night, and the night his day : that he loved not to be long wooing of wenches to yield to him ; but, when he came, he took by force the spoils of other men’s love, and left but lamentation to their lovers : that his music was not the lays of love, but the cries of people, and clashing of armour : and, finally, that he died not bewailed by many, but made many wail when he died, that dearly bought his death.”

The more credit is due to this picture, as Spenser did ample justice to the poems.

“I have caused divers of the poems to be translated to me,” says he, “that I might understand



them ; and surely they savoured of sweet wit and good invention ; but skilled not of the goodly ornaments of poetry : yet were they sprinkled with some pretty flowers of the natural device ; which gave good grace and comeliness to them."

At the period of the Conquest, it was maintained by the English that the nation was of a different and inferior race of men altogether ; and that they were incapable of improvement or civilization, and were, therefore, unworthy of liberty or protection. Such has, in all ages, been the language of the conquerors of a people less civilized than themselves ; but, in this case, the English found it a very easy matter to acquire that character which they denounced as unteachable :

" Those wild men's vices they received,  
And gave them back their own ;"

and the Anglo-Irish lords were soon stigmatized by the government as "more Irish than the Irish themselves."

A curious fact—if it be a fact—recorded by Campion, shows the state of society in the sixteenth century.

" I found," says he, " a fragment of an epistle, wherein a virtuous monk declareth, that to him, travelling in Ulster, there came a grave gentleman, about Easter, desirous to be confessed and houseled, who in all his lifetime had never yet



received the blessed sacrament. When he had said his mind, the priest demanded of him whether he were faultless in the sin of homicide? He answered, that he never wist the matter to be heinous before; but, being instructed thereof, he confessed the murder of five; the rest he left wounded, so as he knew not whether they lived or no."

"Of the change in the character of the Irish music, however, there can be no doubt. In the time of Henry II., Giraldus Cambrensis describes it as both sweet and sprightly;\* and Selden says, that it is the sprightly Phrygian to which they are wholly inclined.

The bards already began to decline in the time of Elizabeth; in that of Cromwell they received a still severer blow; and in that of William III., they may be said to have wholly ceased to exist. They became itinerant musicians playing for hire; and now, instead of the women harpists (for there were no women bards) who walked before the lines of the army singing inspiring songs, we have only the cottage maid solacing her lonely hours with the twang of a jew's-harp!

\* The description itself is poetical, as may be seen from the concluding sentence: "*Tam subtiliter modulos intrant et exeunt: sicque sub obtuso grossioris chordæ sonitu, gracilium tinnitus licentiùs ludunt, talentiùs delectant lassiviùsque demulcent, ut pars artis maxima videatur, artem velare.*"

## CHAPTER VI.

Roundwood—Irish Inns—Field Population—Singularity of Dress—  
The Irish Girl and her Cloak—Military Road—Acuteness of Irish  
Children—Religious Dissensions—The Old and New Guide—Vale of  
the Seven Churches—Description—Legend of the Deer-Stone—  
Modern Change in the Romance of Ireland—Degradation in the  
National Taste—Upper Lake.

ROUNDWOOD stands on very lofty ground, with the Carrigroe and Sliebh-buck hills behind, and the soil descending in front till it mingles with an extensive plain. There is an air of desolation about the spot, which makes one feel surprise, on entering the village, to find, not only a certain degree of neatness, or snugness, but the evident traces of comfort, and even luxury, in its several inns. It is the desolation, however, which has built the inns, and the loneliness of the hills and lakes in the neighbourhood which has attracted travellers to fill them. Grandeur in natural scenery is nothing, in these effeminate times, if it cannot be enjoyed from

a coach-window ; and the wilds of the Sliebh-buck would be untrodden, and the shores of Lough Dan unexplored, if the pilgrim of nature could not return to Roundwood in the sure and certain hope of a good supper and a luxurious bed.

There is, in fact, a very striking peculiarity in Ireland, and already noticed in Dublin—the close meeting of the two extremes of want and luxury. In entering an English or a Scottish town, the traveller, in general, forms a very correct judgment of the accommodation he may expect in the inn from the appearance of the other houses : in Ireland, in the very poorest place, inhabited by a squalid and starving population, he is sure to find a comfortable, if not a splendid hotel. The cause of this is, that, except in the cities, there is no middle class, or none numerous enough to be distinguished. In the fields, we see no sturdy, surly yeoman, as in England, distinguished from his labourers both by the respectability of his dress, and the air of command with which he looks around him. We see but a group of ill-clad men, boys, and women—all of the same rank, living on the same fare, and, very often, inhabiting the same description of houses.

There is another peculiarity in the field population, which, perhaps, should have been mentioned in the chapter on Irish vanity. An individual of this class can very rarely in the course of his lifetime, provide himself with a new suit of clothes ; and he determines, while making the purchase, to



do the thing “dacently.” Instead, therefore, of the round jacket, or short coat, of the Englishman of the same rank, he provides himself with a long-tailed coat, such as is worn by shopmen in England, and others, who write “Mister” before their name; and even this, instead of being of brown or grey, or some other economical hue, is sure to be of the full dress colours, blue or black. Now, I defy the most humane man in the world, to see a crowd of labourers working in the fields, clothed in the *remains* of dress suits, surmounted by a hat,—for the Irishman disdains a cap,—often crownless, or minus at least one side of the brim, without a smile on his countenance, whatever compassion there may be in his heart.

The women of this class are not otherwise peculiar than by a total absence of the female neatness of dress, which, I am confident, distinguished the raiment of Eve from that of Adam after the fall. The materials of a woman’s dress are a matter of no consequence; but there is a certain way of putting it on which distinguishes her in the feminine scale. To account for the existence, or non-existence, of taste of this kind, is very difficult. The Swiss, for instance, are among the best dressed women in the world,—and I do not here talk of the picturesque in their costume; while their neighbours, the Tyrolese, whose country is merely a prolongation of theirs, are among the worst. A French woman, of the class alluded to, is, in general, better dressed than



an English *lady* ; an English girl of the lower rank is in general better dressed—though I dread to say it—than a Scottish lady : but an Irish peasant is not dressed at all—she is covered. When the Irish girl travels, however, if it should be from one cottage to another, she wears a cloak, generally blue, which is, perhaps, the only national dress extant in her country. This is correctly described in our frontispiece ; but, at the same time, on a subject of so much importance, it is necessary to say, that almost in every county there are minute modifications in the garment. The cloak of Waterford, one of the most ignorant districts of the island, is generally supposed to display the most taste. In the times of chivalry, the Knights were accustomed to wear their ponderous furs, even in summer ; and, in like manner, the Irish girl, when she is rich enough to possess a cloak, continues to wear it in the dog-days. The only difference she makes is to throw back the hood in warm weather, and draw it close round her face in cold. I have said, that this is the only article of national dress extant ; for, in fact, we see the grey frieze great coat of the men in other countries, as well as in Ireland. In Russia, it is the dress of the common soldiers, when not on duty ; and as they are, generally speaking, small, shabby-looking men, their appearance when swallowed up in this garb is ridiculous in the extreme.

From Roundwood to Laragh barracks, the country is desolate but not uninteresting ; and by the

time I reached the village of Anamoe, my way was beguiled by the conversation of a humble pedestrian like myself, touching Castle Kevin, the ruins of which lie at some little distance to the left. This was a fortress of the O'Tooles, a warlike and turbulent sept, whose last distinguished chief was executed at Dublin in the middle of the seventeenth century.

Passing Anamoe, the country becomes still more rude, and at length, on turning into the Military Road, the lonely barracks on the Laragh hill reminded me strongly of one of the refuges of the Alps. The military road was constructed at the commencement of the century, for the purpose of introducing carriage-loads of civilization into the Wicklow highlands, which a few years before had served as lurking places for the disaffected. The road is carried, in a very masterly manner, over the highest ground on the route, and the barracks of Glencree, Laragh, Glenmalur, and Aughavanah were constructed to serve as points d'appui. I do not know how it may be with the other barracks; but that of Laragh, which is a large, and no doubt expensive building, is now falling into ruin, and in the course of the coming winter will, I have no doubt, be completely unroofed. Surely this is strange economy.

I was joined on this spot by a little ragged boy of eight or nine years of age, who displayed a degree of finesse very common in Ireland even

among children, but which it would be vain to look for elsewhere in the British Islands.

“You are for the Churches, sir?” said he. I answered in the affirmative.

“I was thinking so, for it’s there the gentry go from the ends of the earth. Och, and it’s a purty place!—with a power of mountains, and two lakes, and old stories about them that would not tire you in a week. But the people say that the guides are a bad set.”

“Do you know Joe Irwin, the celebrated guide?”

“Is it Joe Irwin? Och, the dirty beast! He does not wash himself in a month, but drinks every shilling he gets, and goes in his skin before the ladies! It is shocking, sir. And the rest are not much better:—although I hear say, that there’s a boy who is clean and decent, and drinks nothing at all at all, and knows all the stories better nor Irwin—but for my part I cannot say.”

“Perhaps I can manage without a guide at all?”

“By no manner of means, sir. You will know the boy I have mentioned by a long beard he wears. His name is—let me see—yes, his name is Winders; and he has a large family of childer, who are ill to feed.” In short, before I arrived at the little inn, I had determined that this bearded boy was the man for my money; and I learnt the next morning, that he was indebted for the good for-



tune to his son—one of the identical childer who were so ill to feed.

The inn I found to be about the worst I had ever entered in Ireland; and on inquiring in surprise the reason why they were so totally unprovided with those things that are considered necessities by travellers, I, for the first time on this tour, heard of the religious dissensions which are said to agitate the country. I was told that the number of travellers visiting the Seven Churches was not great enough to support an inn, and that the landlord of the one in question being a protestant, he could reckon nothing upon the weddings, and buryings, and chance custom of the neighbourhood. “In this part of the country,” said they, “a protestant will go into the best inn without troubling himself about the religious faith of the landlord; but a catholic will rather submit to take his refreshments in a whisky-cabin than put a shilling into the pocket of a heretic.”

This being the state of public feeling here, it need hardly be said, that the peasantry around the Seven Churches are plunged in the darkest ignorance. Lord Powerscourt, and some other gentlemen, attempted to establish a charity school, but with little or no success. The building is a neat cottage, built on the side of the hill near the lakes, and the master and mistress of the school are apparently respectable persons—but they have hardly any employment. The priests



at first, terrified lest their flock should gain an unrestricted knowledge of the New Testament, forbade peremptorily the attendance of the children ; but when the books were made to suit their views, and when it was arranged that the catholic and protestant pupils should be taught at different hours, the interdict was removed. The school then flourished, so far as numbers were concerned ; and for a moment the love of learning seemed the ruling passion in the country side. This, however, was soon at an end. The ignorant parents could not be expected of themselves to covet knowledge for their children ; and the voice of the priests, so potential on the other side of the question, was either scorned by the flock, or—what I fear is more probable—was never exerted at all on this. The scholars dropped off one by one ; and at the period of my visit, the children of the Seven Churches were lounging in rags, hunger, and idleness about the country.

I was glad to escape from the village where I slept, and where I had heard nothing but what served to depress me ; and, at an early hour in the morning, placing myself under the guidance of George Winders, I entered Glendalough, or the Vale of the Two Lakes.

I found the guide a respectable looking man, his appearance rendered less fantastic than might have been expected by a rich amber beard, and a black hat with the brim curled up all round.

Winders is a fellow of the new school ; and when he knows his *monde*, does not scruple to sneer at the stories which in his capacity of guide he is bound to relate. He is above all indignant at the fame acquired by the late Joe Irwin—for Joe is dead these ten years, although there is still a Joe Irwin, and ever will be, for any one who asks for the name. According to Winders, Joe was indebted for his reputation to nothing more than his exceeding dirtiness, and amazing absurdity. Invention was the only quality of genius he possessed ; and his carelessness of dress—amounting sometimes to frightful indecency—was not owing to the waywardness of conscious talent, but to a passion for whisky which left him neither time nor means to mend his clothes. This explained the enigmatical accusation of the little boy, who avowed that Joe was in the habit of appearing before the ladies “in his skin !”

Winders, being of the new school, is a grumbler. He complains of the little encouragement given to talent and good sense, and declares despondingly, that if *he* were to write a book, he is absolutely convinced that the booksellers of Dublin, before printing it, would disfigure the title-page with the name of some drivelling old woman of a guide, dead of age and whisky the Lord knows how many years ago. He talks learnedly of granite, and quartz, and mica slate, distinguishes the round from the pointed arch, and

quotes Moore—whom he familiarly calls Mister Tommy—by the yard at a time.

On entering the Valley, and for some time after, I found the scenery by no means so striking as I had expected. The Broccagh and Glenasane hills on my right, and the shoulder of Derrybawn on my left, although massive, and tolerably well wooded, possessed no grandeur of aspect; and when at length my attention was called to a few grey stones by the roadside, as the ruins of the Ivy Church, I began to wish that I had left Glendalough unvisited.

As we advanced, however, the objects around changed gradually in character. The hills became steeper and more lofty; and at the termination of the vista they closed darkly in, shaded no more by woods, but bare and dreary; and one dark-browed giant, called Comaderry, abutting far into the vale at its extremity, seemed to preside sternly and gloomily over the scene.

Of the two recesses thus formed, one at either side of the hill, that on the right, which the visitor has straight before him, is the least interesting. But the eye lingers here only for a moment. It is drawn, as if by fascination, towards the left recess, covered with waters as black as night, which are lost among precipices that seem almost perpendicular. The space between, overspread with ecclesiastical ruins, and dominated by a Round Tower, is the site of most of the Seven Churches;



and the mystic silence which now reigns upon the spot has replaced, according to old tradition, the hum of a city.

The engraving here presented to the reader is not only a gem of art, but is so minutely correct in drawing, that it may serve as a guide to the traveller. The right-hand recess which I have mentioned, does not enter into the view; but a portion of Comaderry serves, with the precipices of Lugduff, in the back ground, to enclose

“—— the lake, whose gloomy shore  
Skylark never warbled o’er.”

The hill on the left is a shoulder of the Derrybawn. Nearer us than the dark waters, and almost confounded with them to the eye, is another lake, from either side of which a stream flows, to be united again below the ruins; thus surrounding the eminence on which the Churches stand, and explaining the name given to the bishopric in the Bull of Pope Lucius III., *Episcopatus Insularum*.

I can call to mind few scenes in any country so striking as that presented to the traveller from the spot on which he is here supposed to stand. The massiveness of the closely grouped hills—which their precipitous form induces one unconsciously to exaggerate into mountains—and their





*Windsor Castle*  
1840



deep and solemn shadow, affect the mind with a feeling amounting to awe; which is increased by the mist that almost always envelopes their summits, and the sombre sky above, affording no relief, or presenting no distraction to the eye. This would form a grand and even sublime view, without any of those adjuncts which address themselves more immediately to the sympathies of men; but, if you place within that magnificent framework the ruins of churches and towers, it may easily be conceived that as a whole, there will be before you one of the most remarkable views in the world.

Crossing the Avonmore brook (in the foreground of the view), I reached an arched entrance, said to have been the gate of the vanished city. In point of size, however, it would have answered better for the gate of a monastery, and indeed I have seen on the continent more than one establishment of this description occupying as much ground, and containing as many churches as the bishopric of Glendalough.\* The passage is short, and contained a gate at either end. The arch of the first gate is supported by the ivy which interlaces the stones, and of which the trunks are as thick as a man's arm. The stones are of granite, very

\* I may mention, as among the last I have seen, the monastery of Saint Alexander Nevskoi, in St. Petersburg, which contains ten churches.



carefully cut, while the rest of the masonwork is of a more common description. It appears evident, from the regular projections which exist in the wall, that the passage consisted originally of two stories.

A description of the churches themselves would be uninteresting except to an antiquary. They appear to me to belong to a period in which the arts were well understood, but to have been elevated by a people who could not afford the superb structures we find in other countries. Some portions of the Cathedral (the ruin to which the archway seems to lead), as well as of St. Mary's Church, to the right of the Round Tower, and more especially of the Abbey, are beautifully executed; while the rest of the walls are finished in a style befitting a poor and simple nation. This hypothesis will account for the few and small specimens of foreign marble, pointed out as objects of wonder and mystery. The cement is excellent, but sparingly used; while the common stone of the neighbourhood, of which the greater part of the buildings were constructed, in some places resembles petrified timber so closely, that a minute inspection is necessary to detect the difference.

To the left of the Cathedral is a small church, the most perfect of the whole, called St. Kevin's Kitchen, roofed with stone, and very massively built. Its *belfry* is one of the *Round Towers* of Ireland, different in no respect from the others,



except in point of size. I am not aware that this fact has been used in argument by the disputants on the subject of these mysterious structures.

In the middle of the view is *the* Round Tower, of which I shall content myself with saying, that it is called by the peasantry Cloch-Theach, or the Belfry ; that its entrance is at a considerable height from the ground ; that it is lighted by several windows ; and that there is no appearance of there ever having been a stair to ascend it either inside or out. Of these constructions there are in the whole sixty-two extant in Ireland, and as they are all—so far as I know—met with beside Christian churches, it does not seem unreasonable to conclude, that they have something to do with modern ecclesiastical architecture. In Russia, the belfries of the temples, frequently as lofty as the Round Towers of Ireland, are like them a separate and distinct building, and are often placed at as great a distance from the church.

In the cemetery, there is a cross eleven feet high, formed of a block of granite, which has various miraculous properties. There *was*, also, a yew-tree, as old, it is said, as the Round Tower itself ; but this has vanished piecemeal. Scattered around are a crowd of humble tombs, all modern—for this is a favourite burying-place—which serve, on the third of June, instead of booths and stalls for the sale of cakes and whisky. On that day there is held

a pattern, or *pathern*, but perhaps, more properly, patron, since it is understood to be the birth-day of St. Kevin. Many of the people who attend perform their stations no doubt very devoutly—for the place is holy—but it always happens that the day closes in drunkenness, strife, and bloodshed. This profanation, not of St. Kevin, but of the goddess Nature, is sufficient proof of the brutified condition of the peasants round the Seven Churches.

I at length left what may be termed the island; and, crossing the rivulet, skirted along the base of the Derrybawn hill towards the Upper Lake. Near the little stream, I was called upon to admire a small block of granite, with a round hollow scooped in the middle, called the Deer-stone. The legend attached to this is, that, in accordance with the prayers of St. Kevin, a deer came every morning to shed her milk in the hollow, for the benefit of an infant whose mother had died in the act of giving it birth. The stone, which is too small for a font, appears to me to have been used for holding the holy water, which it is customary to place near the door of catholic churches, that the devout may sprinkle or cross themselves with it as they go in or out.

On the way to the lake are the ruins of the Rhefeart church, the sepulchre of the O'Tooles, once kings of the country. Near this is the Giant's Cut, a fissure or cleft in the hill, too extraordinary in its appearance to be without its legend; and a

deep glen winding up between Derrybawn and Lugduff, its stream, owing to the over-arching rocks, forming a pool so cold as to be dangerous to the bather.

It is now necessary to say, that the only legend I have heard connected with this valley, which is not disgusting by its absurdity and vulgarity, is the one just mentioned, relating to the Deer-stone. A most extraordinary change appears to have taken place in modern times in the romance of Ireland. If we turn back to the old historians, no country in Europe has more poetical fables; but, if our inquiries are later, we are answered with such stories as might be invented and told by an Irishman of the most ignorant class, provided his imagination were diseased, and his speech thickened by drink. I cannot assign the epoch when this degradation commenced; and that is of the less consequence, as it seems to be forgotten that a better taste ever existed at all. I am not acquainted with the history of the Irish Melodies; but I should like to know whence came such names as the "Black Joke;" "Heigh oh! my Jackey;" "Thady, you gander;" "Paddy Whack;" "Peas upon a trencher," &c. Such titles to the exquisite airs of Ireland are *not* so vulgar and stupid as the legends of Glendalough.

On reaching the shores of the upper lake, it is not easy for the pen to describe the solemnity of the scene which met my view. The blackness of



the water, and its depth—for the cliffs plunging sheer down give the idea of an almost bottomless gulf; the dreary and savage aspect of the hills, with the mist tumbling and swirling on their summits; together with the profound silence which reigned around—all gave a most strange and unworldlike character to the spot. Turning back, to look out of this recess into the broader Valley, there were only tombs and ruins before me, and monuments whose origin is lost in the night of antiquity, and whose very nature and purpose are unknown.

At the base of Lugduff, about the middle of the north side of the lake, there is a small patch of ground, on which are some grey and mouldering walls, very little elevated above the soil. These are the ruins of Teampull-na-Skellig, the temple of the desert, which is said to have been the favourite cell of St. Kevin; and, indeed, I never saw a place better adapted for religious meditation. Near this, and twenty-seven feet from the surface of the water, is St. Kevin's Bed, a poor little hole in the rock, about which an infinite deal of nonsense has been written.

I was not tempted to perform the small feat of climbing into the Bed, but rowed round the Lake, contemplating the different phases of the scene; and I then returned to the inn, with the conviction on my mind that I had visited the most interesting spot in Ireland.

This is said, I know not with what truth, to have



been the opinion of Sir Walter Scott; but it is fair to add, that the place does not seem to have made the same impression on subsequent travellers. Mr. Inglis describes it merely as “a wild spot, not unworthy of a visit;” and Mr. Barrow, although greatly delighted with Winders, the guide, declares that “there is literally nothing to interest a non-antiquarian, with the exception of a round-tower.”

## CHAPTER VII.

Return to Glendalough—Ravine between the Mountains—The Secluded Valley—Lugduff—Precipitous Descent—Road to Rathdrum—Irish Hovels and their Inhabitants—The one thing needful to the Peasant—Condition of the Labouring Classes—Rent of Land—Mistake of the Landlords—Want of Capital and Industry—Practical Fatalism—Beggary—Early Marriages—Rapid increase of Population—Number of the Peasants—Nature of their Crimes.

I HAVE described the tour of the Seven Churches as it is prescriptively performed by the traveller; but he who visits the spot, not for form's sake, but with the holy zeal which distinguishes the worshipper of Nature, in heart and spirit, should not be thus satisfied. I invite him to land from the boat on the same side on which he embarked; and, retracing his steps towards the first lake, to climb the precipice at the spot where a deep ravine is formed by the junction of the two hills, Lugduff and Derrybawn.

Towards the top of this wild glen, the stream which runs through it leaps over a precipice, and

forms a waterfall, unimportant in point of size, but far more interesting than that of Powerscourt. This is the pilgrim's first "station ;" and here he must turn round, and look down into the vale, where the first lake, Poolanass, lies basking in the light at his feet, with the silent ruins of the churches on the right, and on the left the mystic waters of the Upper Lake, as black as night, and as still as death, losing themselves between the hoary cliffs of Comaderry and Lugduff.

On climbing the precipice over which the stream flings itself, we reach the second station, of a character so totally different from the first, that we might imagine ourselves in another country. The view we have just beheld, taking it altogether—its ruins, its lakes so strangely contrasted, and its Mountains of the Black Gulf, which is the meaning of the admirably appropriate name of Lugduff—is, in my opinion, completely *sui generis*. It is not only unlike every other I have seen, but it is of a different *kind*. The view from the top of the waterfall, on the other hand, derives a great part of its interest from the contrast it presents to the first. It is one which occurs in almost every high land country :—a quiet and secure vale, a green nook, shut in by mountain ridges from the world ; where wreaths of thin blue smoke rising here and there, and cultivated fields, and waving grain, tell that it is the abiding place of some small, and poor, and lonely colony of the human race. Such a spot

is frequently seen among the mountains of the Tyrol, and sends a gush of home-feeling through the heart of the solitary traveller. But the valleys of the Swiss Alps, better known to the tourist, can convey no idea of such a scene; for it is the minuteness of the scale which here gives a great part of its charm to the view.

Stay not to gaze your fill; but, after following for a moment the course of the stream—which wanders meanderingly, like a child at play, through the bosom of that simple and secluded vale, till it reaches suddenly the lyn, and tumbles with a shriek over the precipice—turn boldly to the right, for there is yet a third station before us; and press up the steep and rugged brow of Lugduff.

From the ridge of this mountain—for here I admit the name—you have a bird's-eye view of the Glen of the Two Lakes, and of the South Prison, for so is called the little valley we have just left. The Black Gulf below, into which you imagine you could fall headlong, is still an object of fear; but the Round Tower, and the churches, dwindled in size, and indistinct in outline, look like ruined monuments in some forgotten cemetery. Around you, the multiform hills of Wicklow heave their heads in all directions; and the grey clouds, which, in other countries, only visit the loftiest pinnacles, are seen resting on every summit as they float by.

The Irish writer who, I believe, discovered this route, proceeded along the ridge of Lugduff, to the



upper end of the lake, and descended by the dry bed of a torrent.\* He was encouraged to this exploit by the fear of encountering the dread laugh of his guide and comrades, whom he had left below ; but, for my part, having nobody to laugh at me, and if I had, standing in much greater awe of breaking my neck, I returned as I came. Even this was not unattended by, at least, that portion of fear which enters into the composition of the sublime ; for, while I stood upon the mountain, a change had taken place in the atmosphere, producing an obscurity resembling that of twilight. As the mist swirled round the ridges of the hills, and rolled headlong down the precipices, sometimes altogether hiding, and sometimes partially revealing the waters of the Black Gulf, the effect was magnificent.

While descending the steep of the waterfall, and the precipitous ravine into which it plunged, clinging by the trees and lichens, and, owing to the darkness formed at once by the mist and over-arching foliage, with little else to guide me but the cry of the little mountain-torrent by my side, I could have imagined myself in the wildest region of the Alps. And, in fact, I am inclined to believe, that in winter, when the rain courses are swollen, and the torrents rush down into the lake

\* There is an interesting extract from his account given in the Wicklow Guide-Book.

from the summit of Lugduff, and when nearly the whole valley is overflowed, with only the island of the ruined churches rising in the midst out of the waste of waters—I am inclined to believe that there is nothing finer, and I am sure there is nothing *so* original, to be found in any other quarter of Europe.

In order that these notices of Glendalough may be as complete as their necessary brevity admits of, I think it well to add here the account given by the traveller alluded to above, of his descent from Lugduff by the farther end of the lake.

“Down we plunged; and, what with clinging here, and creeping there; now sliding, now slipping; here touching, with many misgivings, our fearful footsteps on that loose ledge; there staying our whole weight on the root of a holly, that writhed ‘its old fantastic roots’ from out the fissures of the precipice, at length we effected our descent, and reached a comparatively easy declivity, that extended from the foot of the mural range to the edge of the lake. \* \* \* In the position we were now standing, nearly at the termination of the lake, behind us the precipices of Lugduff beetling above, with all their craggy fissures and overhanging stratifications; to our right the wild gorge of Gleneola, presenting a bosom composed of enormous masses of granite, piled and tumbled together, and down which a torrent dashed, and sparkled, and bounded; now lost among the rocks, and again bursting forth

to plunge itself into the lake of which it forms the head feeder. Looking on this wild chaotic termination of the vale of Glendalough, and shut out from its eastern end by the headland of Lugduff, the valley of diamonds, which Sinbad the Sailor describes, came to my mind, and I could almost suppose that the Roc should come, to sweep us up with his mighty wing."

When I returned again to the inn, which is about two miles from the lakes, I found that, including the laborious ascent of Lugduff, I had nearly completed a good day's work ; but the sun being yet high, and my quarters being far from comfortable, I set out for Rathdrum, in the direct road to the Vale of Avoca.

On the road, I found the worst description of cottages I had yet met with. They are far less commodious, and indicate less of artifice and ingenuity than the lairs provided for themselves by most of the brutes. In general, they are built against the inner side of the low dyke which lines the road ; this situation being chosen, I presume, that the wretched building may have at least one wall, almost deserving the name. They have no chimney, and frequently no window ; and all the traveller sees to indicate the site of a human habitation, is a small conical heap of dirty straw and mud, rising above the dyke like a dungstead.



If we consider that the masters of these huts are frequently able-bodied men, absolutely idle for a considerable portion of the year, we must per force conclude that the lower classes of the Irish are low down indeed in the scale of civilization. In all other European countries, especially in the colder climates, the very poorest of the inhabitants bestow some care upon their dwellings. In England, Belgium, Holland, for example, the care extends even to a certain degree of decoration ; in France, and Scotland, and some parts of Germany, where a taste for neatness is not so general in this rank of life, all at least is warmth and comfort in the interior. In Russia, the despised serf builds himself a house with pine trunks, which is not only weather-tight, but agreeable to the eye. In general, a balcony runs across the gable which is next the road, and from the projecting roof above hangs a border of carved work, laboriously executed with his hatchet. I brought from Moscow a model of one of these log-houses, which would excite the admiration and the envy of a very great majority of the Irish nation.

I have described, it is true, the worst of the Irish huts ; but these worst are very numerous, and the better kind are not *much* better. All, in fact, exhibit, in a greater or less degree, either a wilful inattention both to appearance and comfort, or a barbarian ignorance of the commonest arts of life. Now, to call the occupiers of these hovels, however



poor they may be, since they have time and hands, and since their country supplies them with at least the raw materials for the work required,—for much might be done with stone and mud alone,—to call them the “finest peasantry in the world,” must surely be intended for cruel and unnecessary irony. That, in another situation, they *would* rank among the finest peasantry in the world, I do not deny. That there are the *germs* in the Irish character of every thing good and noble, I sincerely believe; but these must be relieved from the extraneous load which has so long pressed upon them, and brought out, and developed by moral culture, before the Irish peasantry can take rank with the peasantry of England, Scotland, Belgium, Holland, France, or Germany. As for the serfs of Russia, they are as yet slaves; and till they acquire at least the rudimental idea of freedom, they can only be classed with the beaver, and other ingenious animals, which exert the instincts of their nature in the arts conducive to the comforts of physical existence.

The all-important question is, what the Irish peasant wants to make him other than he is?—and I answer, in a single word, He wants HOPE. To say that he wants more political liberty, that he wants the abolition of tithes, that he wants a repeal of the union, is waste of time. If he wanted all these, and fifty things more, that would not compel him to live in a hovel inferior to the lair of a beast

of prey, and to walk about his beautiful country the most wretched-looking tatterdemalion in Europe.

In England, when a peasant begins the world, friendless and penniless, the mark of his ambition is the next step above him. When he has gained this, he assumes the full dignity of the rank, small as it may be, in raiment, food, and lodging, and fixes his eye upon the next higher grade. He thinks to be one day the farmer himself, and live in a handsome house, and have a family pew in the church. These dreams may never be realized; but, resembling in their properties other windy materials, they work beneficially on the human character, raising and expanding it. The peasant unconsciously respects himself, not for what he is, but for what he may be; and, while waiting for the substantial grandeur in store for him, he plants flowers in his little garden, and trellises the walls of his cot with vines.

An Irish peasant, on the other hand, feels, and can feel, no such stirrings of ambition. His fortunes are not left to the tide of circumstances. His fate is fixed and immutable. If a labourer, he *must* starve for a portion of the year, as there are more labourers than employment, and his con-acre is too dear to do more than *guarantee* that, in return for the time and care he may expend upon it, he shall enjoy a certain number of meals of dry potatoes, according to the extent of the crop. His wages for the year round average only from two shillings to two shillings and sixpence a-week. If a cottier, he is little

better than a serf, being merely permitted to cultivate as much land for his own behoof as will afford him a bare sufficiency of dry potatoes, on condition of his giving up the rest of his time to his master. If a small farmer, he eats his dry potatoes like his neighbours, and hands over the remainder of the produce of his farm to the landlord—generally in *part-payment* of the rent!

There are no labourers, as we understand the term in England; the peasants are all landholders; con-acre being a rood, or other small portion of an acre, taken for a single crop. The idea of the possession of land thus involves that of food. Land they must have on any terms; and the very best terms they can obtain, leave in general, after the rent is paid, only a bare and miserable subsistence. But, more frequently, the rent is not paid, and cannot, by possibility, be paid. The object in this case is, to pay as little as possible, to secrete some of the produce which should be given over to the landlord—to steal, as it were, from themselves. But, even this is of no permanent use, for, of course, it cannot be suffered to appear either upon the person or the land. The unfortunate tenant must still clothe himself in rags, and live in a hovel: nay, according to Mr. Bicheno, one of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, he is liable, when in arrear, to be taken to task by his landlord for eating good potatoes instead of bad.



Here the reader, unacquainted with the country, will be ready to exclaim, "Then the evil lies in the extravagant rent of land!" and he will be astonished to learn, that, with the exception of a few cases, the rent is not only moderate, but low; and that the Irish landlord, supposing him to be paid in full, would draw a much smaller revenue from his estates than the English landlord. It is not the rent that is too great, but the means of cultivation that are too small. With industry, and good management, the present rent would be fully paid, and a large surplus—too large a surplus—left for the tenant. With industry and good management the productiveness of the soil of Ireland might be *trebled!*

If you tell this to the famishing peasant, what is his reply?

"If to work"—says he gloomily—"so long as work can be obtained; if to work for sixpence a day, or even for a mouthful of food, be industry, I am industrious. If to support life in myself and my family, and help the wandering beggar on his way—that way I shall in all probability tread one day myself—on nothing more than potatoes and water, be good management, I manage well. Do you talk to me of the niceties of agriculture, who have not wherewith to attempt them? Do you reproach me with spending a chance penny in folly, instead of laying it out upon land, the produce of which does not, and never can, belong to



me? Give me a capital to begin with, capable of leaving a surplus, however small, after paying my rent, and supporting my family; and then demand an account of my industry and good management!"

This would be so far unanswerable; but, if the theorist should persist in his queries, and, pointing to some miserable hovel, demand, how it was, that with abundance of time to spare, he did not expend upon his habitation even the care which the beasts of the fields, and the birds of the air, do upon theirs, the reply would be more vague.

"It is good enough for me," would be the answer of the peasant: "In a hut like that lived my father before me; and in that hut will my son live after me." So far in words; but, in the listless expression of the man's face while speaking would be read the true explanation—" *I have no hope!*"

In the Swedish provinces of Russia, where a compulsory servage prevails, not worse than the voluntary servage of Ireland, the government steps in between the landlords and tenants. The land is divided by a public commission into small farms, and its real, not nominal value ascertained, and definitely fixed, in roubles and kopeks. There are thus no rackrents; and the population being as yet too small in proportion to the territory, there is no competition for land. This is extremely well under

a military despotism ;\* but, in Ireland, the adjustment must be left to the parties themselves, and the weaker class is, of course, entirely in the hands of the other.

The landlords, who know that they are receiving a small rent, and sometimes only a portion even of that, conceive that they are entitled—nay, that in justice to themselves, they are bound, in settling with a tenant, to carry over the deficiency of one year to the next, and the next, and thus give themselves a chance of obtaining their due. This is, surely, not blameable in itself; and yet it is the cause of many of the evils of Ireland. The produce of the soil is thus mortgaged, as it were, to the landlord, who forecloses, or has the power to do so, when he pleases; and thus a single bad season may keep the tenant's head under water for the rest of his life. The circumstance of a landlord

\* I heard bitter complaints uttered by the nobles of Courland and Livonia against the partiality exhibited by the provincial governors in cases of complaint preferred against their landlords by the serfs. The policy of the present emperor, in fact, in opposing the people to the nobles—the millions to the thousands—has, in my opinion, been too obviously shown for his own personal safety. This is according to the regular process exhibited in all history. The feudal sovereign, jealous of his nobles, and terrified even for his life, attaches himself to the people. The struggle then commences, of which the result is certain; for, when the great bulk of a nation is once set in motion, no human force can stop, although it may check and retard its progress. The people at length know and exercise their power; and, after sundry changes, wars, and assassinations, the tyrant becomes a chartered king, and the nobility a corporate body of the people.

remitting a portion of the rent in bad years, which is so common in England, is here, for the reasons mentioned above, almost unknown ; and this concurs powerfully with other circumstances to deprive the peasant of *hope*.

In England, were a landlord to demand a rent which he knew very well the farmer could not pay, and the farmer, possessing the same knowledge, were to take the land at that rent, both parties would be set down as fitter for a lunatic asylum than for the business of life. Yet this takes place every day in Ireland. The landlord fixes a nominal rent, determining to get as much of it as he can ; and the peasant agrees to pay that rent—or any other, for it is all one to him—determining to pay, after he and his family have eaten their potatoes, as much of it as he can. The stimulus to industry which exists in other countries is thus removed at once ; and the peasant, whom habit has reconciled to the severest deprivation, is contented to lead the proverbial life of a dog—hunger and ease.

The system of nominal rents must have grown out of the competition which exists for land. If, instead of the highest bidder, the landlords of Ireland made choice of the most industrious man for a tenant, and demanded the rent which they knew by experience they should *receive*, they would not be a shilling the poorer ; and a grand experiment would commence, the result of which would disprove the assertion of the enemies of Ireland, that its evils



are caused by a radical defect in the character of the people. At all events, while nominal rents continue, the peasantry *must* remain in a state of starvation.

In other countries, the peasants, when not engaged in agricultural labour, have other employments. The Russians, whether serfs of the emperor, or of the nobles, are frequently mechanics. I have seen them at work in their log-huts, weaving cloth, and embroidering even the finer materials, such as silk and velvet; and, owing to the extreme frugality of their mode of life, they are able to compete with the large manufactories. In Ireland, generally speaking, neither king nor nobles have the policy to do any thing for their peasants; who, being destitute of so much as a shilling of capital, are of course unable to apply themselves at home to the mechanical arts.

The success of the linen manufacture in the north of Ireland shows what might be done with capital and instruction. This was introduced by the Scots towards the end of the reign of Charles II., when they fled from religious persecution, and completed by the French protestants who were banished in 1685, with their arts and industry, by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. At present symptoms appear, here and there, of a spirit of industry arising among the peasant women. The success of a lace-making manufactory at Kells, has encouraged the country

girls to apply themselves to the task, and I trust that this will go on. In a country where the men are unable to find employment for their time, the spectacle of women working in the fields is degrading and disgusting to the last degree.

Under the system described above, it is hardly necessary to say, that there is no such thing as steady industry among the peasants subjected to it. If they hear at all of the improvements which have taken place in agriculture, they disregard them as matters inapplicable to their condition. The rotation of crops is almost unknown. Whatever appears to be highest in the market is sown, and in the event of a glut, the farmer is starved even before the exhaustion of the land would starve him. Irish wheat, which is exported in such quantities to England, is the worst sample in the market; not because the grain is bad, but because it is mixed with the seed of weeds. A kind of practical fatalism seems to be the consequence of want of hope. Even the only food of the peasantry, the potato, is permitted to struggle unassisted with the colts-foot, the couch-grass, the docken, and the pracha-buy which contend with it for possession of the soil. If it is God's will, say they, the field will thrive; if not, we must submit. The crop of weeds in Ireland is the most luxuriant in Europe—as luxuriant as a neglected soil, and a mild and humid climate can make it. These noxious plants,

if properly used, would of themselves be sufficient to manure the whole island.

In the class of the peasantry, where all are poor, and where all are subject to the casualty of being forced to beg, it is not wonderful that a selfish feeling, if no higher motive, should cause the relief of beggars to be considered a sacred duty. You rarely enter a hut without finding a beggar sitting by the fireside, and sharing the scanty meal of the family. The stranger belongs to the same class as his entertainers, and his history differs little from theirs. He has walked a score or more miles away from his abode; for, contrary to the opinion generally formed of his countrymen, he is ashamed to beg where he is known. Often the man sends forth his wife and children, and remains at home in his cold and empty hut, to brood in masculine pride over his degradation and his despair. Children are always a blessing. When young they can beg, and beg irresistibly; and when grown up, they support their parents by their labour. The ties of family love are nowhere else in the world more strong than in an Irish cabin. The wretched group seem to draw close to one another in heart as well as in body for mutual warmth.

Children being considered the reverse of an "incumbrance," early marriages are universal. When the parties are absolutely penniless, the



affections have fair play, and love-matches are frequent; but when one has something, however trifling it may be, an equivalent is always sought, and weighed with the utmost nicety. In Lower Normandy, the selected fair one is turned out into a field before her sweetheart to show him how well she can work; but alas! this is no indispensable recommendation in Ireland. Here, if the bachelor has a pound, or a pig, the maid must have the same, or something of like value. From the calculations that are made, one would suppose the contracting parties to be the most prudent pair in the world, and that they entered the estate of matrimony with the adage in their hearts: *Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus*.

To these early marriages must be ascribed the rapid progress of the population—the rate of which, by the way, does no small damage to the theory of Malthus touching the relation between the quantum of food and the increase of the human race. In the following table, constructed by Mr. J. B. Bryan, we see the movement of the population of Ireland from the year 1672, with the authorities.

1672	Sir W. Petty	.	.	.	1,100,000
—	The same corrected	.	.	.	1,320,000
1695	Captain South	.	.	.	1,034,102
1712	Thomas Dobbs	.	.	.	2,099,094
1718	The same	.	.	.	2,169,048

1725	The same	.	.	.	.	2,317,374
1726	The same	.	.	.	.	2,309,106
1731	Established Clergy	.	.	.	.	2,010,221
1754	Hearth-money Collectors	.	.	.	.	2,372,634
1767	The same	.	.	.	.	2,544,276
1777	The same	.	.	.	.	2,690,556
1785	The same	.	.	.	.	2,845,932
1788	G. P. Bush	.	.	.	.	4,040,000
1791	Hearth-money Collectors	.	.	.	.	4,206,612
1792	Rev. Dr. Beaufort	.	.	.	.	4,086,226
1805	Thomas Newenham	.	.	.	.	5,395,456
1814	Incomplete Census	.	.	.	.	5,937,856
1821	Census 55 Geo. III. c. 120	.	.	.	.	6,801,827

The Census in 1831 was 7,767,401. Mr. Bryan (in his "Practical View") places the movement of the Irish population in juxta position with that of other countries, which will enable us to form a clearer idea of the rapidity of its progress in this starving country.

"I presume the population of Ireland," says he, "to be about eight millions, and from the annexed table it will be inferred, that on an average hitherto, Ireland has doubled her population in about sixty-three years.

"According to Mr. M'Culloch, the population of Scotland in 1700 amounted to 1,050,000; in 1820 to 2,135,000, thus taking one hundred and ninety years to double.

“He likewise asserts, that the population in England in 1700, was 5,475,000; in 1811, it was 10,488,000, requiring about one hundred and seven years to double.

“According to Mr. Mathieu, the population of France would take one hundred and eleven years to double at its present rate.

“The King of Sweden says, that Sweden has added more than a sixth to her population in twenty years, thus doubling in less than one hundred and twenty years.

“We may perceive from Von Malchu’s account of the population of Europe, that Ireland has only seven European states her superiors, and eighteen her inferiors in this respect; and in point of superficial extent of territory, she has but ten states her superiors, and fifteen inferior to her. The Seven United Provinces of Holland, which have so frequently struck the scale in the balance of power in Europe, do not exceed in extent or population Ulster, the fourth province of Ireland.”

Let me add, that according to the census of 1831, the “labourers employed in agriculture,” and the “occupiers not employing labourers,” amounted together to 1,131,715. These, Mr. Bicheno says, are nearly all heads of families, and he thinks that there should be added to the list a great many little farmers, in order to give the number of the poorer class of cultivators of the soil—of that class which are, properly speak-



ing, the peasantry of Ireland. With the above number of heads of families, it is needless to say, that a wife and several children must be reckoned for each individual; and that the grand total will present a vast majority of the population of all Ireland.

When every thing goes wrong; when the crops fail; when even beggary is unproductive—what is the Irish peasant's resource? He creeps out at night, steals a few potatoes, milks a cow, or commits any other trifling depredation. Robbery on the highway, housebreaking, or murder for the sake of plunder, are crimes of very rare occurrence. When he sheds blood, it is either from private revenge, or for the sake of a public principle. To dispossess a man of his land, is to deprive his family of bread; and to put down this enormity, as he considers the exercise of a legal right, is the object of all those societies of which Captain Rock is so distinguished a leader. I once accused the Irish, in my own mind, of cowardice in their outrages, which are usually perpetrated by a large body of men upon a single individual or family; but on becoming better acquainted with the character of the peasant, I viewed the affair in another light. He does not sally forth alone, or in the cause of an individual. He is one of a body of men sworn to punish with blood the infraction of a supposed right; and thus considered, however we may abhor the depravity, and lament the ignorant

infatuation of the gang, their wild and lawless deed acquires in our eyes the dignity of a public execution.

The vices of a “ high state of civilization ” are, comparatively with the extent and condition of the country, but little known. The starving peasant steals food when he cannot or will not beg ; but he does not dream of enriching himself by plunder. He *punishes* by assassination, but he never thinks of murdering for the sake of robbery. His crimes are those of the savage ; and they are not inconsistent with manliness of character, and a species of rude generosity.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Poor Law Question—Mendicity Institutions—Feelings and Prospects of the Country—Rathdrum—Vale of Avoca—Arklow—Gold Mines—Shelton Abbey—Enniscorthy—Wexford—The Desolate Family—Barony of Forth and the Lady's Island—New Ross—Waterford—Reginald's Tower—Whisky.

ALTHOUGH the cottages which gave occasion to the long digression in the last chapter were so wretched, the children I saw playing around were neither naked nor hungry-looking; and I was not accosted by a single beggar on the whole road. One man, however, apparently a stranger, whom I saw sitting on the ground, leaning his back against the wall, attracted my attention by a degree of squalor in his appearance which I had rarely before observed even in Ireland. His clothes were ragged to indecency—a very common



circumstance, however, with the males—and his face was pale and sickly. He did not address me, and I passed by; but having gone a few paces, my heart smote me, and I turned back.

“If you are in want,” said I, with some degree of peevishness, “why do you not beg?”

“Sure it’s begging I am,” was the reply.

“You did not utter a word.”

“No! Is it joking you are with me, sir? Look there?”—holding up the tattered remnant of what had once been a coat: “Do you see how the skin is speaking through the holes in my trousers? and the bones crying out through my skin? Look at my sunken cheeks, and the famine that’s staring in my eyes!—Man alive! isn’t it begging I am with a hundred tongues?”

I shall not permit myself to be tempted to enter at large into the Poor-law question; but what, I may ask, is to be done with such unfortunates as this? A trifling donation from the traveller, or a handful of potatoes occasionally from the peasant, might prolong life, in the case before me, for a few days, or a few weeks. By degrees, however, the wanderer would sink, from insufficient or improper nourishment; and the man who perished, literally by famine, in a Christian country, exporting millions’ worth of rich and wholesome food every year, would be recorded by the laws, if the occurrence attracted observation at all, as having died a natural death!

The commissioners oppose the establishment of workhouses, firstly, because of the enormous sum they would cost, if provided for the reception of all who are out of employment; and, secondly, because when provided, very few would avail themselves of the privilege. The commissioners are right at least in their premises. Their workhouses would cost too much—and the cost would be thrown away. But no one who is acquainted with Ireland, and the Irish character, can suppose for a moment that it would be necessary to provide receptacles for one tenth part of the unemployed poor. In the first place, the Irish rarely or never beg in their own district, or where they are known. In the second place, they are too fond of idle locomotion to shut themselves up to work in a prison, except under circumstances of the direst necessity.

The present Mendicity institutions, so far as they go, are workhouses in every thing but the wholesome restraint and regularity of the workhouse. They in general supply the poor with food unconditionally, and thus offer a premium upon beggary. The habits of industry (if any) that are learned in the daytime are unlearned in the evening, when the paupers are turned forth to freedom and themselves; and thus poverty is perpetuated by relieving the poor without reclaiming the vagabond. The mendicity institutions, notwithstanding, cannot possibly be dispensed with in the absence of efficient Poor Laws.

If no competition for land existed, the land would be let at a real, not at a nominal rent; the peasants would acquire hope, and with hope, all those higher feelings which animate the rural society of England; industry would take the place of idleness; and, even if the landlords had not policy enough to lend their assistance, capital would grow out of industry. With a temperate climate—with a productiveness of soil capable of being trebled—with waste-lands more easily reclaimed than in other countries—with a population possessing the germ of all the social virtues, ready to be developed and ripened under the influence of civilization—the Irish peasantry would become what they are now only in the sanguine speeches of Irish orators, the finest, or *among* “the finest peasantry in the world,” and their country might at length be hailed by her poets, without more than the usual license of poetry—

“—— great, glorious, and free,  
First flower of the earth, and first gem of sea!”

Poor Laws—emigration—societies for reclaiming waste lands, &c. &c., would all tend towards checking the competition for land; but a single glance at the table of the movement of the population, and the estimate of the number of the poorer classes,



near the close of the last chapter, will convince the least informed reader of the absolute inefficiency of any one project. There is no Universal Medicine for a disease so dangerous, so complicated, and of so long standing as that of Ireland. I sincerely believe, that at the present moment there are thousands of wise heads and warm hearts working for the relief of this miserable country. Let them not be deceived by political clamour. The Irish peasantry are ignorant, and may be therefore misled, but there is *no* political feeling among them. Even the religious hubbub exists to no *considerable* degree except in party newspapers. What we hear is the clash and struggle of political organs on both sides. It is, in fact, little more than the old Whig and Tory cry set to a psalm tune.

Rathdrum is a melancholy looking little town, with nothing whatever of interest; but the demesne of Avondale beyond it, through which the traveller, forsaking the high road, may proceed to the Meeting of the Waters, is very beautiful. As for the celebrated confluence of the Avonmore and the Avonbeg, a charming view of which is annexed, there are fifty things more charming in this part of the country to which no name at all is attached. Mr. Moore, however, viewed the spot under peculiar circumstances; and where a solitary wanderer like myself found only an agreeable,



View of the River and the Lake





though not very striking diversity of wood and water, he enjoyed "something more exquisite still."

"'Twas that friends the beloved of my bosom were near,  
Who made every dear scene of enchantment more dear,  
And who felt how the best charms of nature improve,  
When we see them reflected from looks that we love."

It is the property of genius, however, to consecrate whatever it touches; and the Meeting of the Waters will continue to be classic ground so long as a feeling of poetry shall exist in what was once the favourite land of the minstrel. It is said, that Moore sat upon the rustic seat under a tree on the left of the view while writing the song. I opine that he sat on an elbow chair in his own house.

From this place, which in the immediate neighbourhood is somewhat vulgarized by copper mines, the road to Arklow is extremely beautiful. The character of the vale of Avoca, however, through which it leads, is not sweetness and simplicity, as is generally supposed, but a gorgeous richness. The confluence of the Avoca with the Aughrim river is called the Second Meeting, and is not inferior in the picturesque to the first. The road then winds through a magnificent valley, the path sometimes overhanging the steep bank of the river to the left, which is only occasionally visible

through the deep foliage between ; and, with hardly a moment's interruption of this species of scenery, we arrive at Arklow.

The annexed engraving represents this town in its only good point of view ; and I doubt whether any one but an artist of genius could find out that it possessed a good point of view at all. The ruin on the right is the remains of Arklow Castle, the ancient seat of the earls of Ormond, still barons Arklow. It had the honour of being in its day the scene of great bloodshed ; but the intestine wars of Ireland are seldom interesting, and not always honourable to the character of the people. The last slaughter witnessed by Arklow was in 1798, when a large party of rebels were defeated by General Needham.

An excursion may be made either from Arklow, or from the inn at the Second Meeting, to visit the Wicklow gold mines, but this will hardly repay the trouble. It is supposed to have been in the year 1775 that the discovery of this metal took place in these uninteresting wilds ; but so little sensation did it cause, that the knowledge of the circumstance remained for many years confined to the neighbouring peasants. At length a morsel of gold was found, so large as to awaken thoroughly their cupidity, and so eager a search commenced, that the attention of government was attracted. Troops were stationed beside the rivulet, and the



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peasants sent home to weed their fields and eat potatoes. These *deluded* men, however, as they were called, had contrived, it is said, in the course of two months to pick up about ten thousand pounds' worth of the metal; and the government could never afterwards, with all their science, produce much more than a third part of that sum.

Having nothing else to do at Arklow, I crossed the long bridge, on the left of the view, and turning to the left, through what appeared to be a reclaimed morass, walked on to Shelton Abbey, the seat of the Earl of Wicklow. This magnificent mansion lies too low to have its due effect, but still it is well worth a visit. The reader will observe, however, that I have avoided giving any account of the country seats that have lain in my way. To do this for the County Wicklow alone would fill a larger volume than mine; and I thought it better to decline doing that at all which I could not even *try* to do well. There is much taste, notwithstanding, as well as much splendour in many of these mansions; and all I regretted was, to find the contrast so fearful between them and the hovels of the peasantry.

Arklow is summarily described by tourists as one of the most miserable villages in Ireland; and the reason of this brevity is, that tourists rarely or never enter it at all. The road runs past, not through it; and so do the travellers. Those who

go by the stage coaches, however, have an opportunity of seeing a few of the houses, while the change of horses is going on; but the view is not so interesting as to induce them to stand up for the character of the place.

Far be it from me to say a word in favour of the picturesque or beautiful of Arklow; but I am bound to say that it is not a village at all, but a very tolerable little town (for Ireland) of nearly four thousand inhabitants; that it has a great number of small shops, dealing in articles both of luxury and utility; and that among its population I met a fair proportion of well-dressed people.

From Arklow I proceeded by the coach to Wexford. After the Vale of Avoca, the scenery of this part of the country is very uninteresting, at least till we reach Enniscorthy; but it has one peculiarity, that the county is girded in by lofty hills on all sides except towards the sea. Gorey struck me as I passed through it to be a favourable sample of the small towns of Ireland; but Enniscorthy, rising amphitheatrically on the banks of the Slaney river, and dominated by its ancient but habitable castle, looked sufficiently romantic to make me regret the arrangements which compelled me to pass on without stopping. The reader, however, loses nothing on the score of the picturesque, as he will find by turning his eyes on the opposite page. In the drawings of





J. G. W. 1840

J. T. W. 1840

*Engraving*  
*of the town of*



my able coadjutor, there is a union of the poetical and the true, which only they who know the spots he has selected can properly appreciate.

The river scenery here, and indeed all the way to Wexford, is extremely agreeable, and the small barges, gliding between the banks of intense green, give just as much animation to the picture as serves to please without exciting. The bridge, however, will no longer be found so picturesque as it appears in the view; for at the time I drove past, they were busy constructing arches below, for the purpose of rendering it wider and more level. A gentleman in the coach informed me that in Wexford there were two good inns, one cheap and one dear, and both equally comfortable. He advised me strongly to go to the *dear* one. I asked why? "He did not know—it was the fashion." I know nothing about fashion, and so I went to the *cheap* one, which is called Byrne's, and is a very excellent house.

Wexford consists of one long and narrow street, and a very good quay. This every body knows, because it has been repeated a hundred times; but every body does not know that this is only the mercantile part of Wexford. The lanes, it is true, which diverge upwards from the main street, are not inviting, but they do more than they promise, and the adventurous traveller will find it worth his while to pursue them. The upper part of the town, indeed, which stands on lofty ground, is



extremely good. There is a convent of monks, with a promenade, and a convent of nuns beside it; and on a hill, dominating the whole, there is a Catholic Seminary, built in extremely good taste, and commanding a fine view of the town and harbour below, and of the sea beyond.

On the loftiest part of the suburbs, and on the right of the town as I ascended, my attention was attracted by two thick round towers, one roofless, and one covered with a rude thatch, which I supposed to be the remains of some ancient castle. They proved, however, to be windmills which had fallen into ruin, and been stripped and deserted by their owners. While observing this effect, and smiling within myself at the change which this little piece of information had produced in the scene, I saw a little boy come out of the roofless tower, and then another child, and another. These children were not particularly ragged, and looked clean and healthy. I peeped in at the ruined doorway, out of a kind of listless curiosity; but, accustomed as I had been to Irish misery, it was with a sinking heart I saw before me the mother of the little wretches, crouching under a piece of old canvass which was hung from the wall, in the manner of a tent. This was the *home* of the desolate family; a little straw for their bed, and the open canopy of heaven above their heads.

The woman, who was a widow, was not a beggar. She supported her children, heaven knows by what

kind of work. She grumbled but little at her condition, and received the trifling assistance I offered her without any slavish display of gratitude. There was one thing, however, which I could perceive troubled her.

“Do you see what’s forenent me?” said she, following me out, and pointing to the thatched tower—“God help us, what a difference of estates there is in the world! Look at *her*, sir. Isn’t it she that is comfortable with her *thatch*!” This envy of the condition, however, involved no dislike to the individual. She told me that her neighbour was a poor widow woman like herself, with a family of as fine children as the eye could look upon to support.

Wexford notwithstanding this is a flourishing town, as may be perceived by its numerous and apparently wealthy shops, but above all, by the improvements that are going on in the harbour. A steamer from Liverpool was expected on the day I arrived; and several vessels of considerable burthen were discharging at the quay.

One of the most singular districts in Ireland, the Barony of Forth, stretches down from the neighbourhood of Wexford to the sea, at the point of land called the Black Rock. It has no attractions, however, for the picturesque tourist; and I give the following brief description entirely for the sake of its moral and historical interest.

On entering the barony, the stranger will per-

ceive at once the traces of a distinct people, entirely different from the Irish in appearance, in manners, in accent, and occasionally even in language. The soil is under complete and careful cultivation ; the cottages have an air of comfort—a look of *home* ; and, for the first time, a taste for neatness becomes visible, both in the person and habitation.

The inhabitants of this district are the descendants of an Anglo-Norman colony from Pembroke-shire, which settled here, it is said, so early as the twelfth century, under a grant of land from Dermot M'Murchad, then king of Leinster. In order to secure themselves in a wild and hostile country, the colonists, consisting of various petty chiefs and their followers, were under the necessity of entering into the strictest bonds of alliance with each other. They did not drive out the natives, but incorporated with themselves such as chose to remain ; and then, fortifying their little territory, shut themselves up in the most jealous seclusion from the rest of the world.

The land was divided among the chiefs, according to their wealth, or the number of vassals they mustered, and each was obliged to erect a strong castle for his own protection, and that of the community. Thus they were enabled to hold the natives at bay, who gathered like wolves round the enchanted circle ; and in due time they found opportunity to cultivate their fields in peace, and by a better system, and more industry, to produce



opulence where before there had been starvation. The habit of seclusion, however, continued after the necessity for it had ceased ; and it was not till our own day that the inhabitants of the Barony of Forth wholly ceased to be a society of colonists in a strange land.

The ruins of the last of the Anglo-Norman castles are still to be seen near the banks of a salt-water lake at the extremity of the barony. They stand on what is called the Lady's Island, which is at the present day a peninsula, connected with the main by a neck of land instead of a drawbridge. The form of the castle can only be guessed at ; but at some distance in front of the gateway, there is still a square tower, thirty feet high by fifteen. The lower part of this building is a solid mass for about ten feet, from which eight stone steps project, by which the door above was reached.

The castle of Lady's Island withstood many attacks, and appears to have been the only place of strength remaining in the barony at the arrival of Cromwell in the bay of Wexford in 1649. It was summoned by this wonderful adventurer, but refused to surrender to a force of musketry ; although the army before Wexford was nine thousand strong. When two small pieces of cannon, however, made their appearance, the garrison changed their minds, and gave themselves up unconditionally as prisoners ; when the fortifications were destroyed by fire as effectually as was found

practicable, and its defenders marched off to the siege of Wexford. A Convent of Friars which had long flourished under the protection of the castle was also burnt to ashes, and the brethren, who with more constancy than the garrison, refused to carry arms under the usurper, put to the sword. Their blood sanctified the place where it was shed ; and the shrine of the Virgin, to whom the place was dedicated, is to this day a chosen pilgrimage for the devout of the neighbouring counties.

From the circumstance of there being no other place of strength at the time of Cromwell, it is probable that the families of the chiefs had already removed from the district. However, the fall of the Castle of Lady's Island completed the destruction of the high places of the territory ; and it is now inhabited exclusively by a class of yeoman, not *very* far inferior to their brethren of England.

From Wexford to New Ross the country is quite uninteresting. New Ross is well situated on the Barrow, just after it has been joined by the Nore ; and is connected by a wooden bridge with a village, which looks like its suburb, on the Kilkenny side of the river. It has no industry, and no capital, and presents altogether a poverty-stricken appearance. For the antiquary, however, who does not care for appearance, New Ross has great attractions. In former days it was crowded with ecclesiastical buildings, of which some interesting ruins are still extant ; and almost the whole site of the town is







said to be hollowed out with arched passages, and burying vaults. A soldier, according to tradition, once entered an aperture called the Black Hole to explore its secrets, but never returned. The most extensive of these excavations is supposed to be the cemetery of St. Mary's Abbey; but I believe the very existence of such a place has never been accurately ascertained. The inhabitants, learned in old tradition, account for the misfortunes of the town by its being under a curse, incurred by the murder of the friars of St. Saviour's, who were slain by certain fishermen in a fit of jealousy.

The ride from Ross to Waterford is not interesting till we approach very near the latter; but no sooner do we begin to cross a splendid wooden bridge over the Suir than, without the smallest preparation, we find before us what appears to be a splendid city. I say appears; for there is nothing in Waterford to realize the expectation excited by its quay. This is the finest city promenade in Ireland; and is not excelled by any thing of the kind I recollect elsewhere, except the quays of St. Petersburg. It forms one unbroken line an English mile in length; with a portion at the water side railed off from the carriage road the whole way.

The annexed view is taken from the opposite end of the quay, in order to present in the foreground its most conspicuous object, Reginald's Tower, or the Ring Tower as it is called by the lower classes of

the people. Its Irish name, although probably not the most ancient one, is Dundery, or the King's Fort ; and its history may be read in brief in the following inscription placed over the doorway.

“ In the year 1003, this Tower was erected by Reginald the Dane—in 1171 was held as a Fortress by Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke—in 1463, by statute 3rd of Edward IV., a Mint was established here—in 1819 it was re-edified in its original form, and appropriated to the Police Establishment by the corporate body of the City of Waterford.”

Besides the quay, there are several good streets in Waterford, but also an undue proportion of filth and misery. The very large exports of the place, of which I do not feel myself called upon to give an account, do not seem to include *whisky* ; at least the number of places appointed for the home consumption of the article is beyond all reasonable bounds. One is reminded of the anecdote of the English troops landing at Waterford, when one of them, on giving a shilling (a thirteener) for a glass of this potion, and receiving back twelve pence in change, declared in a transport of joy, that this was the country for him—where whisky was to be had for nothing !

I perambulated the city a good deal ; but either owing to my not being in the vein for sights, or to there actually being nothing to be seen, I find little worth transcribing from my notes.



## CHAPTER IX.

Barbarism of the County Waterford—Irish Girls—Diet of the Peasants—The Potato—Prejudice against Fish—Scenery of the Blackwater—Lismore Castle—Its History and Present Appearance—Monks of La Trappe—Tradition of the Blackwater—The Mysterious Shape—The Enchanted Castle—The Fatal Kiss—Dissolution of the Love Spell.

ON leaving Waterford in the direction of Lismore, the traveller has his choice of two roads; and I recommend him to take the old and steep one, in preference to the other. The road lies over finely swelling hills, with a deep glen on the left, and the vista in front closed by mountains.

I found all traces of the civilization of a great town disappear very shortly after leaving Waterford; which I did on what the Irish call Shank's mare—viz., on foot. In the interior of this county, the people are extremely ignorant, and I addressed many who did not understand a word of English. The women, in general, were not so well dressed as

English beggars ; but I observed an instinctive delicacy in the sex, of which the other is wholly ignorant. The men do not care a straw how much of their skin is exposed by their tattered raiment, but the women are invariably covered from head to foot.

On this walk, I saw a good many of the national cloaks already described, and a stranger would suppose their wearers to be of a better class than the common peasants. In one case, however, I passed a young woman so pitiably arrayed in rags, that I should have offered her alms had she not been engaged in field labour ; and soon after she overtook me, on her way to Kilmacthomas, with the cloak over all. I would have asked her some questions in reference to this charitable garment—for like charity, it covereth a multitude of sins—but she had no time to waste upon idlers, and, pleading haste, she set off in the half trot which an Irish woman can keep up for half a day.

But it is not in locomotion alone that they excel. Their strength is frequently quite as great as that of a man—a fact I once ascertained by personal experience. I was standing, hesitatingly, at the ford of a broad, but very shallow river, thinking within myself whether it would be worth while to wet my boots by crossing ; when suddenly I found myself caught up by some one behind, carried with great rapidity through the stream, and set down dryshod on the other side. My bearer

was a very young girl, who had taken this mode, not uncommon here, of earning a penny. She was low in stature, and spare in figure; while in size and weight, I am certainly not under the common average.

A potato diet cannot be unfavourable to the health and strength; but to have the proper effect, potatoes, when they are the sole nourishment, ought to be eaten still more abundantly than would be necessary with other kinds of food. Some misapprehension prevails in England with regard to the diet of the Irish peasant. By potatoes we imagine is meant that dry, white, mealy vegetable we see at our tables—or used to see, for potatoes have grown vulgar!—and which we sometimes declare, as it breaks and crumbles under the fork, we *could* live upon ourselves, with the addition of a little milk or butter. This, however, is the potato which the peasant raises expressly for *us*. It is the true pomme de terre, since he, who should know best, calls it himself an “apple;” and, like most other good things, it produces its own likeness in comparatively small quantities. For *him* to eat these, even supposing he could pay his rent, would be culpable extravagance, almost as bad as drinking tea.

The next quality of potato, called the “cup,” he in general sells also, although it produces much more than the apple; and for this reason, that there is still a worse quality behind.



This is called the “lumper,” which produces almost one third more than the best, and which accordingly is the food of the peasant. The lumper is moist and heavy, and said to be difficult of digestion, and therefore unwholesome: but even here I believe there is some mistake. An article of food, which is the only nourishment of several millions of people, *cannot* be unwholesome to them. To Mr. Smith, I allow, it would be death—if for the sake of argument we are allowed to suppose the impossibility of his swallowing it; but Mr. Smith does not work in the fields, and live in a cabin.

The bread which is the principal nourishment of the Russian serf is moist, heavy, black, sour, and in every way more unpalatable than the Irish lumper. It is unwholesome too, and indigestible when eaten in any but small quantities by the other classes of society; but the serf could not live without it. He is partial to white bread it is true, which he eats, when he can get it, as a kind of cake; but to be compelled to subsist on such a thing, he would consider a sentence of starvation. In like manner, while the Irish peasant remains in his present condition, he must, I fear, be contented to share the lumpers with the stall-fed cattle of his masters. At the same time, let us not be blinded to the real hardships of his lot, by the stories of sentimental tourists, who talk of the amiable hospitality of the cottagers in presenting them, from their pot, with a beautiful *mealy* potato!

Besides the three great classes of the potato which I have mentioned, there are various subdivisions, the names of which are almost as poetical as those of the Irish Melodies. Witness, for example, the Redmond Kidney, the Barbarous Wonder, the Curl, the Long Cork Red, Judy Brown's Fancy ! These names are of themselves sufficient to prove the modern introduction of the vegetable into Ireland.

A little buttermilk is all that is usually aspired to as an accompaniment to the potato ; but even this is more frequently dispensed with than otherwise. The pig is sacred to the landlord, to whom he goes in the shape of rent, accompanied by the fowls, chiefly geese, which pick up their living on the high road, and among the hedges. The lakes and streams, indeed, abound with fish ; but the peasant does not like fish. In general, he is permitted to angle with a rod, but lines and hooks are rarely comeatable ; and when they are, he will rather content himself with his half meal of potatoes than take the trouble of using them. I once expressed my astonishment on this head to a small farmer who complained of the wretchedness of his condition. He replied, that he sometimes fished in the lake, but always sent what he caught as a present to his landlord, or somebody else whose favour he wished to gain. " As for eating them ourselves," said he, with a shrug, " they are but poor diet for poor people. A bit of meat we

should be thankful for ; but fish ”—and he ended with another shrug, which explained in how little estimation he held it as food. On the sea coast, these prejudices are equally strong. Some kind of fish they will not touch at all, and I have seen a skate tossed back into the sea which would have fetched a good many shillings in an English market.

Kilmacthomas is a large village, chiefly composed of huts, but without any very striking signs of poverty. I next passed through Dungarvan, which is somewhat a circuitous route, without finding any thing to repay me for my trouble ; but, on reaching the banks of the Blackwater, I again fell in with that beautiful river scenery which is nowhere more beautiful than in Ireland.

It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the beauty of the Blackwater at Lismore. I never saw before so rich a foliage, so much diversity of surface, and so striking an effect of light and shadow combined in one picture. The towers of the castle, rising on a lofty steep which overhangs the river, are no doubt a happy adjunct for the artist ; but I am not acquainted with any place which could do better without such associations. In the annexed engraving, the scene is presented as it usually appears to the traveller ; but they who are admirers of the antique will also scramble along the sides of the precipice on the other side, to obtain a view of the northern front of this celebrated building. It













is there flanked by dark circular towers, half concealed by the trees ; and appears to hang threateningly over the gulf below. From other points of view, it presents a modern and *trim* aspect, which disappoints the expectations of those who are acquainted with its history.

Lismore castle was founded on the ruins of an abbey by King John, in the year 1185. After being destroyed by the Irish, and undergoing various other fortunes, it was rebuilt, and became an episcopal residence ; till, at length, in 1589, it passed with the rest of the manor to Sir Walter Raleigh, on consideration of a yearly rent of £13 6s. 8*d.* ; and was afterwards sold by him to the Earl of Cork. In 1626 the famous Robert Boyle was born within its walls. In the rebellion of 1641, it withstood successfully a siege by five thousand Irish under Sir Richard Beling. On this occasion it was defended by Lord Broghill, the Earl's third son ; whose letter to his father is well known, but still worth reprinting here.

“I have sent out my quarter-master to know the posture of the enemy ; they were, as I am informed by those who were in the action, five thousand strong, and well armed, and that they intend to attack Lismore. When I have received certain intelligence, if I am a third part of their number I will meet them to-morrow morning, and give them one blow before they besiege us ; if their

number be such that it will be more folly than valour, I will make good this place which I am in.

“I tried one of the ordnances made at the forge, and it held with a pound charge; so that I will plant it upon the terrace over the river. My lord, fear nothing for Lismore; for if it be lost, it shall be with the life of him who begs your lordship’s blessing, and styles himself your lordship’s most humble, most obliged, and most dutiful son and servant,

“BROGHILL.”

Two years after, the castle was attacked again by a still greater force, and again remained triumphant; but in 1645 it was at length taken by Lord Castlehaven. The defenders on this occasion were Major Power, and a hundred of the Earl’s tenants; who are said to have been allowed honourable terms of capitulation, after expending all their powder, and killing five hundred of the enemy. This sounds like one of Napoleon’s bulletins.

From the Boyle family, Lismore passed into that of Cavendish, in 1748, by the marriage of Lady Charlotte Boyle, daughter of the fourth earl of Cork to the fourth duke of Devonshire. The present duke has done much to improve and beautify the place; but, what is of still more consequence, he is said to be the best of the very few good landlords in Ireland.



This fortress covered, originally, a considerable space of ground, as may be seen by the walls and towers still remaining. Between the boundaries, however, and the castle, there is now one of the most charming promenades in the world—a little paradise of walks, and plants, and trees. The path leads in some places to the very brink of the precipice which overhangs the Blackwater; whence a view is commanded of the deep vale below, and the eye carried along numerous vistas opening among the mountains beyond. I left the path, scrambled for some distance along the precipice, and returned another way, my mind filled with more pictures, each altogether distinct from the rest, than a week's walk could have procured me almost anywhere else.

The principal buildings of the castle surround a large square, and are furnished with modern doors and windows, with more attention to comfort than to good taste. The square, notwithstanding, has a gloomy appearance. I passed in unquestioned. Not a human being was visible; and even the sound of the wind among the trees was no more when I entered the deserted area. At that moment there stepped gravely up to me a large eagle; and I could not help starting back, and eyeing him respectfully, as "one having authority." He contented, himself, however, with an attentive examination of my appearance, and I strolled on.

In the interior of the house, there are none of

the incongruities observable outside. All is substantially elegant. In these luxurious days, however, one fine suite of rooms resembles so closely another, that there is no telling the difference: yet, at Lismore, I must say, there is some tapestry, and some splendid doors of Irish oak. But the most striking thing is, the view from the windows—a fact which was felt before me by no less a personage than James II. This King-errant entered the castle, like myself, from even ground; and, going up to one of the windows in the great room—still called King James's window—started back aghast on finding himself perched, at a vast height, over a dark and rapid river.

The little town of Lismore was formerly a city, distinguished for its learning and the number of its religious edifices. The present cathedral is a very handsome church, rebuilt a few years ago on the site of the old, and as much as possible in its character. Of the town itself, all I can say is, that it is reasonably clean, and that the inhabitants have an appearance of more than ordinary comfort. Mr. Inglis—who brought to his task (so much more important than mine!) the most perfect singleness of purpose, and a very high degree of intelligence—has explained, that the flourishing condition of the duke of Devonshire's tenants, is caused by the rent of land being proportioned to the capabilities of the farmer. With such details as it was Mr. Inglis's business to give, I have

nothing to do in the present work ; but I feel bound to say, that, in so far as my own observation went, I can bear testimony to the general correctness of his statements.\*

But I have mentioned a name which calls up gloomy ideas. I made the acquaintance of Mr. Inglis at the house of Thomas Pringle, an elegant poet, and one of the most amiable and estimable characters that ever existed. Both are now dead, and at an age when men, both as physical and intellectual beings, are in their pride of place. Mr. Inglis had no children ; and his wife, therefore, usually accompanied him in his travels ; a lady fully capable of enjoying and appreciating his pursuits. His general plan was to employ the booksellers merely as his agents, retaining the property of his works in his own hands ; and, in this state of independence, his literary life passed away, unharassed by many of the evils which are the common lot of authors by profession.

I did not proceed to Cappoquin to see the Trappist establishment ; but wandered across the country, I can hardly tell how, till I found myself again on the banks of the Blackwater. The success of the Trappists tells favourably for the waste lands of Ireland, and unfavourably for the Irish character. The land has been reclaimed, and the stone walls erected, in a considerable part by voluntary labour ;

\* "A Journey throughout Ireland, in 1834. By Henry D. Inglis."



and, if the peasant can work so well without wages for the good of his soul, it surely would not be too much to expect him to do a little for the good of his body. Even as he is at this moment, in his present forlorn and impoverished condition, he could make his dwelling comfortable ; he could clear his fields of weeds, and thus increase the produce ; he could cut off the absurd tails of his coat, and mend the jacket part with them : in fine, he could comb his hair, wash his face, and make himself look like a civilized man. He may tell me, however, that in his Trappist labours, he has the hope of salvation before his eyes ; while, in those I propose, he would have no hope at all, but that of starving with more dignity : and to this I have nothing to reply.

I should like to know, however, how much the contributors of money to this religious bauble give, and have given, to relieve the miseries of the country. These contributors are mostly Catholics ; and the Catholics—I mean of that class who have money to give—I have not only heard, but know of my own knowledge, contribute far less than their fair proportion towards the support of charitable institutions. The duke of Devonshire, it seems—whose general liberality, however, cannot be doubted—subscribed a hundred pounds towards setting up in the world a few poor enthusiasts, who propose to fulfil the duties imposed upon them by God and society, by coming under vows never



to exchange words with their fellow-beings of the earth. I hope, for the credit of the human understanding, that his Grace has repented him of this gift before now ; but I call upon him, in public testimony that he has done so, to present a thousand pounds towards encouraging the improvements and industry of his town of Youghal.

The valley of the Blackwater—or, as it may sometimes be termed, the glen of the Blackwater—is, so far as I have seen it, the finest in Ireland. It comprises in itself every variety of the picturesque, while the scenery in which it is imbedded gives it something more. I am no admirer of country-seats in a place like this. When taken as a portion of the picture, they almost always spoil it ; and I think, therefore, they should be considered merely as points of view. Still the seats on the Blackwater exhibit, in general, a high feeling of the beautiful in nature, and they are, therefore, worthy of commendation.

I rejoined the river at a spot to which no path led, and where I did not observe the print of a human foot. I was in search of the locality of a tradition which I had heard—if the reader will pardon the vulgarity—in a little shebeen, or whisky-cabin, in a by-road, leading, as they told me, to a place bearing the unpoetical name of Tallow. I approached the river by a break, or bay in the woods, which seemed at some early

period to have been under cultivation, but was now a waste, filled only with those weeds which usually follow and obliterate the traces of the plough. The opposite bank was a majestic precipice, nearly resembling that at Lismore, and clothed with woods to the very summit; while the one on which I stood was formed by a naked rock shelving down almost a hundred and fifty feet, in regular, though gigantic steps, to the water's edge. The bank, except just on the summit of this naked rock, was completely wooded, like the other; and some superb trees flung their branches from the steep, as if in rivalry with their neighbours on the opposite side.

The river is here so narrow, that this disposition of the banks entitles it, justly, to its name of the Blackwater; and, more especially at the hour when I saw it, when the shadow of the further steep was flung slantingly across, till it met the base of the cliff on which I stood, it appeared, when the rest of the earth was still bright with the declining sun, a gulf so deep, and dark, and mysterious, that I was struck with involuntary awe. *Through* this blackness, notwithstanding, the water looked bright and clear; some dancing bubbles gave token that its current, though smooth, was by no means lazy; and I could well conceive, that, in the mid-day heats, it would form a delicious basin in which to plunge for shelter from the beams of the sun.

And this cool retreat, according to the ancient crone who told the story, it was found to be—many a long year before the quality who now own the land were seen in the country side—by a young man whose father was the chief of the domain. It was he who ploughed the land with his own hands; it was he who assisted Nature in her rude attempt to construct a stair to the river; and it was he, beyond all the boys of the valley, who took delight in throwing off his clothes on a summer's day, and plunging into the deep, clear waters of the lyn.

One day he left the pool troubled in his mind, he knew not with what. He endeavoured in vain to grasp some dim idea which had passed across him, without form and void. He felt as if a waking dream had been before his eyes while he lay in the water, and fled as he emerged, only leaving him a vague desire to know what it was. The next day, a Shape passed him by, he hardly knew of what nature. It might have been a spirit, such as haunted in old times the lakes and streams of his country; for the form of a woman could hardly have been so dim and shadowy. He tried to ascertain in which direction it had fled, but in vain; and he left the lyn with slow and melancholy steps.

The next day the Appearance came, and was more distinct. The eyes, which hitherto he had rather felt than seen, rested fully upon his, although only for an instant; and the shadowy



form resolved itself into the figure of a young and beautiful girl, disappearing when observed among the trees. When she was gone, the youth bewailed his folly in not having sprung after her at once ; but a kind of faintness had come over his heart at the moment, as well as a dimness over his vision ; and the next moment, he could scarcely have told by which side of the river she had made her retreat.

Eagerly did the young man long for the next morning ; but when it did come, and the hour of midday drew near, mingling with his hopes, there came a feeling almost of terror. In approaching the river, at one moment he ran, and the next hung back ; at one moment a sudden glow broke over his face, and the next he grew pale, and felt as if ready to sink. But the coolness of the lyn restored him ; and throwing his eyes warily around, he determined, on the first sight of this mysterious visitor, to bound after her, if she should take refuge in the thickest of the wood, and demand why she haunted him.

And she at length came. He saw a hand as white as snow extended from behind an oak which grew near the margin of the pool, on the opposite side ; and then her dress became gradually visible, as she leant forward slowly and furtively ; but the instant her head appeared, and her eyes lightened upon his, conquering with a strong effort a kind of shock which he experienced, the young man



sprang out of the water, and bounded up the steep. A wild scream rent the air as she fled ; but, once fairly engaged in the chase, he felt an enthusiasm akin to madness ; and, before he had reached the summit of the precipice, he knew by the sound of panting before him, that he had gained upon the object of his pursuit.

Onward she fled through the forest beyond the river, which in those days was called the Black Forest ; and onward the youth bounded, as if life and death depended upon his success. By degrees, however, her strength failed, and at the same time the path became more difficult. A wilderness of rocks upheaved themselves in the midst of the trees, as if to bar further access ; and when the beautiful fugitive would have sprung upon the ledge of one of them, in order to gain a narrow ravine which ran up by its side, she missed her footing from the weakness of fatigue, and tottering against the cliff was only thus able to preserve herself from falling.

“ I have you,” cried the youth, “ be you woman or fairy !—and before you leave this spot you must say why you haunt me.”

“ I do not know,” replied the damsel, casting down her eyes in confusion.

“ Who are you, beautiful unknown !—a princess, at the least ! Where is your dwelling ?”

“ Close at hand : and since I am in your power, I will conduct you thither, if you desire it.”

“ Say rather that I am in your power. Lead on, fair mistress, for your captive will follow.”

She entered the little ravine, and glided silently along the narrow path ; which at length widened by degrees. A thousand rare plants and flowering shrubs grew by the side, and diffused an intoxicating odour around ; tall trees threw a shade over their head ; the whole grove resounded with the music of birds ; and butterflies of a thousand gorgeous hues fluttered from flower to flower. But she was the goddess of the scene. Onward she glided, stately and yet timid ; her eyes bent bashfully upon the ground, yet her head turned so as to allow a full rich cheek to be disclosed, through the wreaths of hair that hung upon her shoulders. The birds seemed to know her as she passed on. Their wings drooped as they flew over her head. Sometimes they alighted for an instant on her shoulder ; and once a linnet pursued by another attempted to take refuge in her bosom.

They at length arrived suddenly at the gate of a magnificent castle, and the youth, struck with amazement, entered after his conductress without uttering a word. As he went in, a costly dress was thrown over his shoulders by the valets ; and he was thus able to meet, without the confusion he must otherwise have felt, the eyes of a numerous and brilliant party assembled in the saloon.

“ God save all here !” said the youth, half thinking that the pageant would dissolve at the sound of the holy name.

“God save you kindly!” was the reply. All then was right. His mistress was a princess, and he was the happiest of men. After a splendid feast, which made him ashamed of the frugality of his father’s table, dancing was commenced, and continued with true Irish spirit. But his damsel was the queen of the ball. The most beautiful where all were beautiful, the most graceful where all were graceful, she moved among her companions, distinguished and alone, like the moon among her attendant stars. The youth seized a thousand sweet and secret opportunities of whispering his vows into her ear; and before the dancing was finished, he had the inexpressible happiness to know that his passion was returned.

It began to get late, and he was under the necessity of tearing himself away. The damsel followed him to the door to bid good night, as is the wont of lovers, and the light in the hall now diminished to a single lamp, was faint enough to conceal her blushes. After appointing, with many endearing words, to return on the following evening, the youth demanded a kiss as a token of the terms on which they stood.

“Impossible!” cried the damsel, “not for the world! Away, or you will spoil all!” He begged; he insisted; he endeavoured to snatch the favour by gentle violence: but all would not do.

“You know not what you ask,” said she, in agitation. “Lightly as you may esteem it, a kiss



would ruin us both. You would never again find your way back to my father's halls !”

“ Surely you jest,” cried the lover, “ or else this is idle coquetry. Why should I return to your father's halls, for the purpose of seeing one who thus cruelly refuses me a favour which I prize more than life, and which will not rob her lips of one breath of fragrance, or one tinge of beauty ?”

“ Alas ! alas !” said the damsel, weeping, “ I know not which is the more fatal, to refuse or to comply.” She blew out the lamp suddenly.

“ There,” said she, “ kiss me, and begone,—but look not back if you would live !”

He clasped her in his arms, and having printed an impassioned kiss upon her lips, groped his way to the door, and went out. The night was chill, and he shivered with cold as he emerged into the open air. It was besides so dark that he had some doubts of being able to find his way ; and, after considering for a moment, he determined to return, and beg a lantern from one of the servants.

The hall was in utter darkness, but it felt so different, as he groped his way along, that if he had been farther away than the threshold, he must have imagined he had made some mistake. Patches of damp mud, and spiders' webs—or what seemed to him to be such—came down from the walls, as he touched them ; and, beset with a vague feeling of horror, he passed on towards the door which led into the saloon.

The door was open, and he could see by the general form of the room that it was the same ; but instead of the splendid furniture, there were only two or three broken stools ; and instead of the blaze of light, some burning sticks lay in the middle of the earthen floor. The walls were of mud ; the roof of thatch, falling in here and there through the blackened joists ; and the fragments of the feast lay scattered upon the dark and dirty floor, in morsels resembling the contents of a beggar's wallet. Of all the company, there was only one left ; a woman, clothed in rags, and bending, with her back towards him, over the dull embers. She rose up, with a scream, as he staggered forward ; and notwithstanding the dirt and tears that bedaubed her face, and the torn and filthy apparel which concealed her figure, he recognized the mysterious damsel.

Overpowered with horror, the youth fled from the spot ; and as he fled he could hear the screams of his deserted mistress echoing through the miserable abode. A feeling resembling guilt dogged his heels as he threaded the forest with the instinct of the forest-born ; and a sound of unearthly sobbing appeared to shake the woods. When he at length gained the margin of the pool, the moon emerged suddenly from her prison clouds, and looked down with a smile which seemed to turn the water into liquid silver. He saw the reflection of his figure in the mirror ; and tearing off with

horror and disgust the dress he had received at the enchanted castle—and which was now a mass of noisome rags—he plunged into the river. The words of the damsel were true : he never returned to her father's halls, and never even bathed again in the waters of the Black Lyn.

The main incident in the above story, namely, the metamorphosis from fair to foul, is repeated with various modifications in the traditions of Ireland. It was the esoteric meaning of the tale, however, which attracted my attention ; for, when the old crone had finished, I could not help thinking that she had rehearsed, without knowing it, an allegory not difficult of explanation !



## CHAPTER X.

Irish Traditions—Supernatural Beings—Magical Imposition on the Senses—Saint Lateerin and the Blacksmith—The Pooka—The Haunted Brake—Story of Brian and the Goblin Horse.

THE Blackwater is not wanting in traditions ; but in general, they are not so Irish as I could wish. A tradition, to be completely interesting, should belong exclusively to the country and the people, nay, to the district, in which the event is said to have occurred. Every narrow glen like the Dargle has its lover's leap ; and the story of the lover's leap of the Dargle, therefore, however frequently it may be heard, is remembered by nobody. Glendalough, on the contrary, although abundantly provided with precipitous rocks, has no lover's leap, but a story connected not only with the scenery of the spot, but with the every-day superstitions of the valley. The consequence is,

that no visitor looks up to St. Kevin's Bed without thinking of the fate of two lovely young women who were swept from the steep by a gust of wind, and perished in the lake. It is the belief of the peasantry of that district, that a female who repeats in the cell of the saint a certain number of paters and aves will never die in childbirth ; and, one of the poor girls in question, large with her first child, was goaded on to the fatal duty by her superstitious mother. At the most dangerous part of the route, she became terrified ; caught for support at her sister, who had accompanied her, and dragged her down into the gulf.

The neighbourhood of the Blackwater, however, is abundantly peopled by the supernatural beings who are either peculiar to Ireland, or, at least, have become naturalized. In general, they work by means of what the Scots call *glamour* ; that is, by deceiving the eyes of the spectator, and making him see things which have no existence at all. In the volume of this work which relates to Scotland, it is remarked that glamour, or a magical imposition on the senses, is common in the oldest fictions of the East, and more especially in the sacred books of the Buddhists. I recall the fact here for the benefit of those who derive the Round Towers, and every thing else that is Irish, from the followers of that great reformer. Let me remark, however, by way of a caveat, that if this theory is successful, it will completely destroy the character of the country

for antiquity ; Buddhism being certainly not three thousand years old.\*

The glamour of the Irish is precisely that of the Scots, being principally used to make mean or worthless things appear grand or valuable. It could make ivy leaves, clipped round, pass for pieces of gold—

“The cobwebs on a dungeon wall  
Seem tapestry in lordly hall ;  
A nut-shell seem a gilded barge ;  
A sheeting seem a palace large ;  
And youth seem age, and age seem youth :  
All was delusion, nought was truth.”

In Ireland, as well as in Germany, the fairies are called the Still People ; in Scotland, they are the Men of Peace. In both countries they live in apparent magnificence, and real misery. But, in Ireland, they sometimes resemble, more closely than the Scottish fairies, the dwarfs of Germany. When seen in their real form, they are small, grotesque-looking men, wearing a little red cap ; reminding one of the brown dwarf who was accosted by Keildare, only substituting for the cap, red hair :—

\* Some years ago, in an article in the Westminster Review, I collected all that is known—so far as I could find it—on the subject of Buddha ; placing in juxtaposition the opinions of the learned with regard to the era of his birth. The article was well received by the laborious Germans ; but I never heard a word about it in England.



“ His russet weeds were as brown as heath,  
 That clothes the upland fell ;  
 And the hair of his head was frizzle red  
 As the purple heather bell.”

Among the saints who may be invoked to most advantage by those who are in danger from the fairy host, is Lateerin, a saintess of the neighbouring county of Tipperary ; whose praise is sung in the following stanzas, communicated to the Dublin Penny Journal.

When the *slua-shee* appear in lonely dell,  
 And revels are rife when mortals dream,  
 And wizards behold—but dare not tell—  
 The spells that are wrought by haunted stream :

When the *shee-geehy* rolls its boding cloud,  
 And arrows unseen in vengeance fly ;  
 When the voice of the *keener* is wild and loud  
 O'er the maiden that died by the evil eye :

When the art of the midwife fails to save  
 The young mother doomed to *fairy fort* ;  
 When the traveller's lured beneath the wave,  
 Where *Donall na Geela* keeps his court :

What saves in the hour of faery,  
 When goblins awake and gnomes have sway ?  
 What scatters the ranks of the dread *slua-shee*,  
 That circle the midnight traveller's way ?

Supreme o'er the spirits of earth and sea,  
 When blessed Lateerin's name is spoken,—  
 The Druid enchantments fade and flee,  
 And the spell of the midnight hour is broken.

Through regions remote extends her fame,  
And many a clime and age can tell,  
What pilgrims invoking her holy name,  
Drank health at the flow of her sainted well !

Lateerin lived near Cullen, in the state of poverty and mortification befitting her calling ; and was accustomed to walk down to the smithy every morning for a bit of lighted turf, which she carried home in the fold of her petticoat. Now, although a saint, Lateerin was young and handsome, and the smith could not help seeing that she had a beautifully turned leg. Every time she came to his forge, he admired her legs the more ; but, fearing that it was a sin to admire a saint's legs, he kept his thoughts for a long time to himself. At length, however, he could be silent no longer ; and, thinking that there would be no harm in making the remark, just, as it were, for the sake of conversation, he came out with what was uppermost in his mind.

“ Och, Saint Lateerin,” said he ; but you have a purty pair of legs !” On this the poor saint, who had not the least idea before that she had such articles as legs at all, looked down, very naturally, to see whether he had spoken the truth ; and, with the motion, the bit of turf was displaced, and her petticoat caught fire. Wrathful was Lateerin at this accident. She prayed that Cullen might never again have a smith to set people's petticoats on fire ; and from that day to this no iron would

reddeu in the village. It is a curious fact, although one which rests upon the anonymous authority alluded to above, that there has been no forge at Cullen within living memory; and yet Cullen is "well situated for a smithy, being a country village, and a place of much resort, having a chapel, a burying-ground, and some public houses."

While quoting from the Penny Journal, I may tell my English readers that it is—or was—a publication, so far as I have seen it, devoted strictly to objects purely Irish, and more especially to topographical details. I should like to see a penny journal of this kind in England; and it would not interfere with the more general nature of the Penny Magazine. Such a work is always sure of eliciting contributions from the provinces. It turns the attention of intelligent people to their own district, and diffuses a spirit, not only of individual, but local ambition; while its unpretending character invites the co-operation of those—the most useful, because the most honest and earnest of all correspondents—who would shrink from interference with an expensive literary miscellany. One advantage of its humble title is, that it precludes the idea of pecuniary recompence to the contributors; although, in point of fact, the supposed poverty is imaginary. I know that the Penny Magazine offered a hundred pounds a year to writers of but moderate name for *occasional* contributions: and it is understood that a similar



work in Edinburgh brings, or did bring, to the Messrs. Chambers, a very handsome revenue.

One of the most curious of the Irish preternatural beings is the Pooka ; an eccentric sprite, who lies in wait for the passer by, generally at the edge of some desert common, or morass, in the shape of a little, shaggy, unkempt horse ; and, starting up between his legs, bears him off with the speed of the wind. In vain the involuntary rider attempts to throw himself down when passing a piece of soft ground ; he continues, in spite of his teeth, to sit bolt upright, even when the route lies through a quickset hedge, or grazes along a rugged wall. Onward flies the malicious poney, snorting, kicking, and flinging ; but withal pressing straight on, as if he was riding a steeple-chase. A precipice at length presents itself in the distance, of at least a thousand feet sheer down into the glen ; and the headlong haste of the creature redoubles. Swearing, praying, and sweating, the unlucky horseman had hitherto been sufficiently employed to prevent his mind from sinking under the terrors of his situation ; but, at this spectacle, the perspiration dries upon his limbs, his strained muscles relax, his eyes close, and he only *feels* that he is nearing the inevitable gulf with fiery speed : when, just as they touch the brink of the cliff, the poney turns sharply away, and continues his flight along the uneven edge. Thus do they ride, the ill-assorted pair, the livelong night ; and the Pooka,

as fresh as at the outset, seems only in the middle of his sport, when the crow of a cock arrests him as he flies. With a tremendous fling he dismounts his fare in an instant ; and the traveller finds himself floundering in a bog—and alone.

This is the general form of the Pooka, and the most common course of his proceedings ; but, it must be said to his credit, that a certain wild generosity is sometimes observable, even in his maddest frolics. The rape of a farmer, in the manner just detailed, is seldom altogether without provocation ; and, on the other hand, he has been known, when the traveller passing his lair was just about to sink from fatigue, to rise gently up between his legs, and carry him to his own door. It is true, that in such cases, the dung-stead is in general the landing-place, instead of the threshold ; but, considering that the rider pays no hire, this trifling gratification to the Pooka cannot reasonably be grudged.

The Pooka, it seems, belongs to the East, as well as Buddha ; but I doubt whether there is any authentic testimony of his presence in Ireland before the avatar of the kindred spirit, Whisky. I should think, on the contrary, that these two visited the Green Isle together ; and it may be a question, whether the Pooka, even after the Bog of Allen is reclaimed, will take himself off for good and all, unless his comrade is with him.

I could hear of no exploit of the Pooka on the

Blackwater—or indeed any where else in Ireland—half so poetical as some that are described in printed books: but this is of no consequence; truth is the main thing. The following anecdote I choose among three or four, because it is the shortest.

About midway between Aglish and Clashmore, there was formerly an extensive brake, filling the space between what is now the high road to Youghal and the river. The road, indeed, existed at that time: but it had not acquired either its present dignity or traffic. It was lonely and dreary; and, especially at a place where it skirted round the brake, possessed a character which made its acquaintance rather shunned, than coveted, by all but those whose lands or occupation lay in the line.

A large, but ruinous, farm-house stood near the north end of the brake, and was the only human habitation within several miles. It had been built by the father of the present proprietor, a sturdy, bull-headed Welshman; who had strayed away, on account of some disgust, from the Barony of Forth. The whole country-side laughed at his folly in expending the broad pieces his new-fangled mode of cultivation had earned, on a farm-stead set down on the very confines of the Pooka's ground—for the brake was haunted. Many prophesied that his land would never bear; but all agreed that the



speculation would end in some striking and awful catastrophe.

The farmer, however, paid more attention to the tillage of his ground than to the remarks of his neighbours. His rent, owing to the bad odour in which the place was held, was a mere nominal one—although not in the sense the term has acquired to-day; and, after many successful seasons, which reduced the bitterest of the jeerers to silence, he, at length, in the triumph of his heart, put forth his hand upon the brake itself, and attempted to bring its sterile wastes under cultivation. This fool-hardiness was his ruin. Night after night, some one of his labourers was carried off by the Pooka, and found groaning on the dung-stead, so much bruised and exhausted as to be incapable of work for a week. The farmer discharged them, man after man, as accomplices of the supernatural enemy; the reclamation of the waste became his hobby; and, with the natural obstinacy of his disposition, he attached himself more and more to the object the more hopeless it became. His other fields were neglected; the capital was withdrawn from the productive, to be spread on the unproductive land; and, at length, when his whole funds had been swallowed up by the brake—devoured, as it were, by the Pooka—he took to his bed, and died of vexation.

His only son, a fine young man, but something wild, now found himself in the situation of the heir

of Lyn. When the funeral was over, at which the house was drunken dry by the inhabitants of the whole country-side, he sat down to reckon the amount of his inheritance. It consisted of a farm that had lain fallow for years, but which he had no capital to cultivate; and a brake, on which much capital had been expended, only to prove that it could never be cultivated to advantage at all. What could he do? Nothing. And he did nothing. He turned away his thoughts from the farm, and fixed them upon Aileen O'More. This was worse and worse. Aileen was the prettiest girl in the province; and when his father's projects had flourished, she had been set apart, by both families, for his wife. But Aileen was an heiress—"and there's an end."

Rian was like to go distracted. It was, of course, not worth while, in such desperate circumstances, to attend to the two or three fields he had left with crops on them; and it seemed as if Nature herself, taking advantage of his situation, conspired to make his ruin more complete. Instead of corn and barley, he was mocked with a beautiful harvest of weeds; and even a field of potatoes (for Sir Walter Raleigh before this time had planted his dirty Batata in the college garden at Youghal) presented him with plums, but no apples.\* What

\* Potato-apples, as the English call them, are named "plums" in Ireland, and the roots themselves, when of the best quality, are "apples."

was to be done? He started up one evening in the midst of his meditations; and, as if finding the house too small to breathe in, went out to walk.

“No, no, Dare-devil,” said he, patting his poney that came trotting across the court to him—“the time has now come when two legs must satisfy me; and, as for you, I would advise you to be as easy as you can, till you see when will you get another feed of any thing comfortable. Has Dennis been after halving the oats upon you? Agh, what is the use of making two bites of a cherry? There, my poor fellow, eat your belly-full this time, any how; for the Lord knows when you may get another!” and, shaking out the last of the corn, he pursued his way.

In happier times, it had been his custom to turn to the left, in the direction of Lismore; for, on that road, a few miles distant, was the habitation of Aileen: but now, choosing a scene more in unison with the state of his thoughts and fortunes, he turned to the right, where the path skirted along the brake. The waste had not been touched on this side by his father’s plough, and it presented a dreary and savage aspect. It was a desert of fern and brushwood, interspersed with stunted trees, fragments of gray rock, and pools of water; and, being at this moment covered with the shadows of evening, an air of mystery hung over the spot, which harmonized well with its traditional associations. The moody Rian smiled as if he had



found a comrade; and, slackening his pace, lounged slowly along, listening to the night wind, that sighed through the wilderness, and watching the patches of grey vapour moving like phantoms across its bosom.

“By my soul!” said Rian, “there are here so many Pookas, that I doubt whether there be any at all! But, if there be, let him come out, and try whether I am afraid. He has taken away my father, and my fortune, and my love, and good right he has to give me his countenance. Come out of that, you ugly brute; and I swear by St. Patrick to mount on the outside of you without flinching!” A grey object appeared in the uncertain light, crouching at a little distance by the roadside; and Rian’s heart leaped to his mouth, although he advanced with the full determination of fulfilling his vow. But it was only a stone; and he passed on, daring the Pooka as before.

He at length left the brake behind; and, although the night had now come definitely down, he continued to pursue the Youghal road. A conjecture may be hazarded, that the darkness of the hour was the very cause of this conduct; that he felt some repugnance at the idea of returning by so dreary a path, which, by this time, the shivering of the trees, the wailing sound of the night wind, and the fitful glimpses of the moon, made a thousand times more dreary; and that, in short, it was his purpose to raise his spirits at the shebeen, which

stood on the present site of Clashmore, before repassing the territory of the Pooka, whom he had so valiantly invoked.

However this may be, he did proceed straight on to the shebeen ; and, finding some young men of the neighbourhood there, he sat down, and under the influence of the Irish elixir, speedily forgot that he was a beggar, a cast-off lover, and the victim of the Pooka. The songs of the joyous party were heard wide and far around ; and, if the goblin was really present in his customary haunts, he must have heard the shout of defiance with which young Rian, at length, set out on his return home. His high spirits did not desert him, even after reaching the brake. He continued to sing, and shout, and caper, as is the wont of Irishmen on their way home from the shebeen ; and this continued till he distinctly heard steps on the desert path before him.

Rian looked in the direction of the sound ; but all he could discover was that there was no such thing as a human figure on the road. His heart began to beat ; a thousand confused images crowded through his mind ; he was not even certain that he was going the right way, being conscious that his progress had not been as the crow flies, and he turned round to observe his bearings. At that moment, a great shaggy, hairy head, was thrust between his arm and his body, with a force that was nigh to dislocating the shoulder. His oath

instantaneously occurred to Rian ; and, not daring to trust himself with a look, he shut his eyes, and sprang desperately upon the back of the infernal courser. The triumphant neigh of the Pooka rang wildly and far over the waste at this consummation. He reared himself on his hind legs, danced for an instant about the road ; and then, stretching out his neck, and pointing his nose, set out northward, at a gallop that outstripped the wind.

Rian knew that it would be of no use to try to throw himself off ; and he therefore yielded with a good grace to his fate, and kept his seat, clinging instinctively to the mane. When they had nearly arrived at the turning to his own house, he made one desperate effort at command.

“ It’s home I’m going,” cried he, “ in the name of the blessed Lateerin ! To the left, you evil brute !” and, catching at the long shaggy ear, for want of a bridle, he gave it a wrench in the desired direction. The Pooka made but one spring from the road-side, and, clearing a white thorn bush, was in an instant in the brake ; driving helter-skelter through it, sometimes shoulder deep in the rank vegetation, splashing through the pools, leaping the rocks, and scraping the skin off his rider’s legs against every tree they passed.

Rian’s brain, which had been swimming with whisky before, went round now in real earnest. He began, at length, to take a strange pleasure in the sport, for he had always been a keen horseman.



Loudly he shouted at every feat of especial excellence, and his wild laugh resounded through the brake. The goblin-steed at length darted into the road once more, and clattered away with undiminished speed to the north as before.

“Now for Aileen O’More!” cried Rian, fairly mad with the excitement—“mounted as I am, I may visit a queen!” and, tugging alternately, at the ears of the charger, he pointed out the route—which, perhaps, after all, it was the purpose of the creature to have taken of himself. On flew the Pooka, till Mr. O’More’s house was at hand; when, to the astonishment of Rian, he darted down a path by which, in happier times, he had been wont to find his way to his mistress, when desirous of escaping the observation of the family. In an instant he bounded through a narrow gap in the hedge, and his heels clattered through the paved court.

“Hold, there!” cried Rian, with a sudden spring, which the Pooka seconded by as sudden a fling; and, in a moment, he found himself stretched under Aileen’s window—and alone.

“Holy saints!” said the young lady, throwing open her lattice, “What is to do here? Who are you, in the name of goodness?”

“I am myself,” replied Rian, rising with difficulty, and feeling whether any bones were broken; “and I give you my honour I have ridden a

hundred and fifty miles to see you, Aileen *a Roon*, this blessed night !”

“Oh, it was too great a risk ! My father will murder you, and maybe send me to a nunnery ! In God’s name, why did you come clattering through the court, as if you wanted to awaken the dead, as well as the living ?”

“It was myself that could’nt help that same,” said Rian : “But I have no time now to tell you what a thief of the world it was that brought me here. Say, Aileen, in a single word, are you true or false ?—but no, do not speak if you are false; only shake your head, and draw back into your chamber, and leave me in the clouds of night. But if you are true, tell me with your eyes, and your breath, and your heart, and your soul—there, Aileen, speak it on my lips !” She leant out of the window, wound her white arms round his neck, and they were just in the midst of a thundering kiss, when Mr. O’More and his servants, armed with scythes and flails, made their appearance on the scene.

“God save you, Mr. O’More !” said Rian.

“God save you kindly,” replied Mr. More—“O you young villain ! is it after my daughter you are coming here, like a thief of the world as you are ?”

“A thief comes quietly,” said Rian with composure ; “*I* came like a whole herd of wild bulls.”

“And in the holy name, what for did you come at all at all?—in the dead of the night, and clattering through the yard like an evil spirit!”

“Because I could not help it. I love your daughter; and, if there is strength in man, or wit in woman, she shall be mine; but I pledge my sacred word that I had no thought of coming to see her to-night. In short, I was carried off bodily and brought here by the Pooka.” Aileen screamed at this announcement, and many of the servants shrunk back aghast; but Mr. O’More, who saw no occasion for reference to supernatural agency, was in a towering passion.

“Look here,” said Rian, in the midst of his invectives—“look at my clothes torn in pieces by the thorns of the brake—look at the blood streaming down my limbs”—

“Thunder and turf! I’ll look at nothing. You were drunk, and murdered yourself in this way with fighting.”

“I *was* drunk, and very drunk too:—but I was on the Pooka for all that—and so will you be any night you choose to pass and repass the brake, vowing to St. Patrick that you will get upon the goblin’s back if he appears.” Now Mr. O’More was a stout-hearted man, and he knew besides that the country-people, with whom young Rian was a favourite, would revenge any outrage he offered him: so a plan came into his head to get rid of him quietly.



“ Well,” said he, “if what you say be true, there’s a fate upon us which we cannot get over. To try it, I will do as you direct to-morrow night ; but on this condition, that if I am not carried off by the Pooka, you give up your call to my daughter.”

“ It is agreed,” replied Brian ; “ provided on the other hand, that if you *are* carried off, you fulfil your promise, and give Aileen to me.”

“ Done !” said Mr. O’More.

“ Done,” responded the other, and the thing was settled.

The next evening, according to the arrangement they had made, O’More called at Rian’s farm, to show him that he was actually on his way to embark in the adventure. He sat down for a while ; and his host, in order to make sure that all should go on precisely as it had happened to him, having provided a great measure of whisky from the shebeen, they enjoyed themselves comfortably. When it was at length time for the adventurer to take his leave, Rian brought out a cloak and a slouching hat.

“ You are not accustomed,” said he, “ to such rough riding as, by the blessing of God, will this night befall you ; and, seeing that you are the father of Aileen, I am willing to give you the benefit of my experience. Draw this old hat of mine over your brows ; wrap this old cloak of mine about your shoulders, and when you mount, wind its folds well round your legs. Never trust me but

you will be all the better for that same ; and if they were made of the hide of an elephant it would be better still !”

“Thank you, Rian, my boy,” said O’More, whose heart was now merry within him ; “I’ll take your cloak and hat, but only to keep in the warmth of the whisky. And as for the Pooka—haroo !” and he gave one of those wild shouts with which the Irish are wont to signify their exultation or defiance.

“Remember your vow to St. Patrick,” said Rian solemnly, “and keep it better than your promise to me !”

By the time O’More had almost passed the brake, the warmth of the whisky, in spite of Rian’s cloak, was no more. Although he had lived in the neighbourhood all his life, as divers of his ancestors had done before him, he had never before been on the spot after sunset ; and he vowed in his own mind that he never should again. The loneliness, the silence, the desolateness of the place seemed preternatural ; and, in the intermediate state of drink in which he was, with neither the calmness of sobriety, nor the recklessness of intoxication, the scene had a double effect. With a glass less, he could have seen the true extent of his danger ; with a glass more, he could have defied it.

No sooner had he completely passed the brake, than he wheeled round with desperate resolution, and commenced his return. The night was dark

and blustry ; and the wind, before on his back, now beat, cold and sharp, on his face. Sometimes he raised the broad hanging brim of the hat for a moment ; but speedily closed it down, as he found that he could see only a few yards before him, and that those few yards were peopled with innumerable Pookas, which as he passed them, one by one, assumed the form of stones or trees. At last, all on a sudden he heard a noise behind him, as if some animal had leaped from the brake upon the road ; a clattering of near feet ensued ; and, before he could collect himself, a huge, shaggy, hairy head was thrust under his shoulder.

“ In the name of God,” cried O’More stoutly, “ I defy thee !—But I will keep my oath to St. Patrick ”—and he mounted forthwith on the Pooka ; who no sooner felt the weight of his victim than, dancing as before on his hind legs, he stretched out his neck, pointed his nose, and set forth with truly devilish glee on his midnight journey.

By the time they had nearly gained the turning to Rian’s farm, O’More had recovered from the first shock ; and, travelling as they had been on a smooth road, he began to think that a man in a hurry might do worse than bestride the back of an evil spirit. With his presence of mind returned his worldly thoughts ; and he imagined that if he could only contrive to let the Pooka expend his energies in a straight-forward race, there would be



no need for Rian knowing any thing about it. The accursed creature, however, as if penetrating his plans, darted suddenly down the turning to the farm ; and when O'More, in desperation, wrenched him by the ear,—hey, presto, begone !—he bolted right through the hedge, and scampered, neck or nothing, into the haunted brake.

Then began the troubles of O'More ! Then did he discover what rough riding was ! Sometimes he was bumped against trees and rocks, till he made sure that the leg was broken in a dozen places ; sometimes he was dragged through ponds and ditches, till he supposed, from the water splashing in his eyes, that he was descending into the depths of a quagmire ; and sometimes, buried over the head in fern and brushwood, he thought he had no chance of emerging into light till the day of judgment.

At length the unearthly courser sprang once more upon the road, and, turning his long nose northward, galloped onwards with untiring speed as before. When they reached this time the turning to Rian's farm, O'More had no longer either strength or spirit to oppose the mischievous intentions of the brute. He suffered himself to be carried unresistingly into the court, and he fell down from the back of the spectre as they reached the door, and lay there without sense or motion.

“ It is enough,” said he, as on awaking he found Rian in great alarm, pouring whisky down his

throat. “If God be willing, you shall marry my daughter to-morrow; and I vow to St. Lateerin that, if necessary, every penny in my pocket shall go towards assisting you in relaiming the haunted brake!”

The vengeance of the Pooka was probably slockened on the family of Brian; for from that day to this he never appeared again on the banks of the Blackwater. In less than a year a famous crop of oats was growing on the brake; and Aileen herself, although she had grown preternaturally fat about the waist, was not afraid to traverse its furrows. The pony which Rian had fed so liberally on the night of his terrible ride (and which, by the way, must have sympathized with the sufferings of his master, having been found the next morning in a cold sweat, and covered with mire and slough in the stable), remained a permanent favourite. One peculiarity of this animal was his mode of snorting about Mr. O'More—particularly when he wore a cloak and a slouching hat—and then running to his master.

“By the powers!” said Rian, on such occasions, half killing himself with laughing—“It’s my opinion he cannot tell which is which!”

Such are the stories of the Irish peasantry—and I allude to both the traditions I have given of the Blackwater—although, it is hardly necessary to

add, that the esoteric meaning is not always made so evident. But there is another, of a still more popular description, which elicits unbounded applause when recited, but when committed to paper is a very foolish affair indeed. The hero of this romance is a peasant, quick, clever, and sharp-witted, and withal having a strong propensity, like the rest of his countrymen, for the funny; and the incidents are a series of practical rogueries which he performs upon some fat-headed patrician of the neighbourhood.

This is not *rebellion* on the part of the peasants. It is the escape of rebellious feelings through a safety-valve; and it will be a fatal day for Ireland when such stories cease to amuse the cabin—unless they have been drowned in the noise of the shuttle and the steam-engine, or rendered inapplicable by the convergence, in point of knowledge and education, of the two extremes of society.

I have not described minutely the Blackwater, because I am more desirous of making the reader acquainted with Ireland and the Irish than with the various country seats which abound in the island. Suffice it to say, that I arrived at the mouth of the river where it falls into Youghal bay; and that the ancient town presented an appearance which was imposing in more than one sense of the word.



## CHAPTER XI.

Youghal—Sir Walter Raleigh—First Earl of Cork—Ruins of the Collegiate Church—Origin of the Crest of the Duke of Leinster—Estuary of the Lee—Cork—Aspect of the City—Upper and Lower Classes—Suburbs—Sail on the Estuary—Black Rock Castle—Passage—Harbour of Cove—Town of Cove—Jingles—Sunday Strollers—Bianconi and his Cars.

YOUGHAL, or as it is pronounced Yahle, aspiring the h, appeared to me in the likeness of a busy, bustling, dirty, vulgar town, with a pig-market entered from the principal street, and a population flocking through the thoroughfares like a drove of swine. It is necessary to say, however, that it was a market day when I entered; and a place whose traffic is chiefly in pigs and pork, must be permitted to savour in some degree of the unclean animal. Still, there was much more confusion than was called for by the occasion. The empty carts, waiting probably for their four-

footed freight, were huddled together without order, and advanced so far into the street as to render the channel intricate. Even the human bipeds seemed to have no idea of the art of getting along easily in the world; and altogether the scene gave me the idea of an ill cared for, and not too civilized place.

This, however, is a scene presented, in a greater or less degree, by almost all the towns of the south of Ireland. In the north, there is either more wholesome municipal authority, or the people are more inclined to obey. In Sligo, for instance, I have seen a carter handed into the magistrates' office, and smartly fined, for leaving his horse in the street to his own meditations, for a space not greater than might suffice a reasonable carter to swallow a glass of whisky.

Youghal, notwithstanding, is a very ancient town, and played a conspicuous part in the Irish wars—the only wars, perhaps, the history of which we find it impracticable to read. It was completely walled, and several fragments of these fortifications, besides an entire gateway, are still extant. It was besieged and taken by the Earl of Desmond in 1579, and so closely were his troops employed in plundering, that the whole of the inhabitants escaped from the town. Left thus to themselves, the conqueror's garrison were soon obliged to decamp for fear of starvation; and the Earl of Ormonde entering signalized his good fortune by

hanging the poor mayor, who had surrendered to Desmond, at his own door.

But, leaving its wars alone, it was here where Sir Walter Raleigh resided for some time; and it was here, as men say, that he planted the hateful and pernicious potato, as Cobbet would have called it—a detestable root, which, according to Sir William Temple, has destroyed Ireland and the character of the Irish by enabling the people to live for a week on two days' labour! It was here where the first Earl of Cork died, the most thriving adventurer of his time. When he landed in Dublin, his *kit* was as follows, according to his own schedule: Twenty-seven pounds three shillings in money, and two tokens which his mother had given him, namely, a diamond ring and a bracelet of gold, worth about ten pounds; a taffety doublet, cut with, and upon taffety; a pair of black breeches laced; a new Milan fustian suit, laced and cut upon taffety; two cloaks and competent linen, and necessaries, with his rapier and dagger. This moderate outfit was metamorphosed in process of time to a revenue of fifty pounds a day, without reckoning sundry noble demesnes. It was here also that Old Noll terminated his Irish expedition, and embarked for England—only leaving “the curse of Cromwell” behind. The town yielded to his summons without striking a blow.

The Collegiate Church of Youghal is the grand



lion of the place. When entire it was supposed to be among the finest specimens of architecture in Ireland. It has now been converted into a new church ; only leaving the ruins of the chancel for a monument of its ancient magnificence. Of these ruins, the oriel window, as represented in the engraving, is extremely beautiful ; indeed I do not know that there is any thing finer of the kind in Ireland. This part of the building is roofless, and in other respects a total wreck ; the transepts are burying places ; and the nave alone continues to fulfil its original destination. This is said to have been very splendid before the sons of little men fitted it up for their devotions. The roof was richly fretted, with a ground of dark blue, representing the vault of heaven, with the stars carved in Irish oak, and gilded. At present it is a dull, heavy building, with a plaster ceiling, and a row at either side of very plain Gothic arches forming the aisles. The monuments of several noble and distinguished families lie scattered around, all sharing in the ruin and neglect of the chancel. Pride, which in general plays its fantastic tricks even in a cemetery, and blazes on the walls of our houses in a hatchment, keeps aloof from the ruined church of St. Mary. The monuments of the greatest families in the kingdom are suffered by their descendants to fall into as complete decay as if they covered only the common dust of mortality.



*Langford Church*  
1791







*Parsons Ferry*  
on the River of Gwent.



“ Shall we build to the purple of pride,  
The trappings that dizen the proud?  
Alas ! these are all laid aside,  
And here neither dress nor adornment’s allowed,  
Save the long winding sheet, and the fringe of the shroud !”

There is also another ruin here of less note ; that of an abbey founded by one of the Fitzgeralds in 1628. A tradition respecting this personage is supposed to explain the meaning of the monkey forming the crest and supporter of the Duke of Leinster, who claims to be his descendant. When Thomas Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald was an infant in the cradle, at his father’s castle in Tralee, he was caught up, it seems, by a tame baboon ; who sprang with him to the loftiest part of the walls, and, to the terror and amazement of the spectators, dandled him for some time, in that awkward situation, in his arms. Having gratified his strange fancy, the creature descended again with his charge, and deposited him, with all the careful tenderness of a mother, in his cradle. From this adventure, Fitzgerald was ever after called the Ape.

I left Youghal by the mail-coach, for two reasons. In the first place, I knew that the country was extremely uninteresting for a great part of the way ; and in the second place, I desired to gratify myself only with a hurried glance at the celebrated estuary of the Lee, in order to have the greater pleasure in exploring it afterwards in detail. I



had been in Cork before, ten or eleven years ago, but was not then in a frame either of mind or body to appreciate the picturesque. I had made a passage of *four* days from Bristol in a steamer; in the course of which our boiler had burst—we had run short of coals—had been chased by a storm—and undergone a variety of other sea adventures; and by the same token, the unfortunate vessel was so glad to get to the end of her voyage, that on reaching the quay at Cork, not satisfied with the safety offered by the usual station, she ran up against the bridge, carrying away a part of the parapet.

All, therefore, may be said to have been new to me on the present visit; and it was almost with shame I recollected that on the former occasion I had so much of the animal in my nature as to feel uncomfortable in such a scene. This entrance to Cork in my opinion is far finer than the entrance to Dublin by the bay. In the latter, the expanse of water is greater; and for that very reason, it has less of the picturesque. Here the objects are only sufficiently remote to give us the idea of grandeur but not enough so to sacrifice a single detail which could be brought advantageously before the eye. But when I talk of grandeur, I mean only that species of it which arises from extent and capacity. The scenery of the Lee is beautiful, and nothing more. The hills on either side are low; their sides are dotted with white villas, gleaming through

the emerald green of Irish foliage; the water between sparkles with gay vessels, a very large proportion of which are evidently intended for pleasure rather than commerce; and the city itself, from the points at which you catch a view, though a fine component part of the picture, is destitute of those spires and towers which impress the traveller with ideas of magnificence, as he approaches from a distance some mighty gathering place of the human kind.

The quay receives only small vessels, and there is nothing in the aspect of the houses by which it is lined to indicate commercial wealth; but the visitor no sooner arrives at the bridge close by where he lands, than he finds himself at once in a great city. On his right, on the other side of the bridge, rises a street so steep and lofty that it might seem inaccessible to carriages; while on his left, to which he is directed in his search for an inn, lie a series of massive, broad, and level thoroughfares. This contrast continues throughout. The ground is so irregular that at almost every turning you are presented with a new picture; and the houses themselves, in height, form, and colour, are as unlike each other as human caprice could well make them. The taste of the builders, however, though differing in details, seems always to have one grand meeting-point—the desire of forming, out of these irregular materials, a wide, massive, and regular street.

The shops are rich and handsome ; they are filled with the articles which minister to the wants of the great and wealthy ; the equipages which rattle past are brilliant ; the persons who descend from them are—ladies and gentlemen. But all this is within a small circle. All this presents itself to the stranger before he has been half an hour in the place ; and he says in his own mind, that Cork is a very fine city, that Cork is a second Dublin.

But there is one very remarkable difference between the two cities. Let any one endeavour to call up before his mind's eye the idea of Dublin ; and straightway there rise before him the Bank, the Customhouse, the Four Courts, the University, the Castle, separated and surrounded by a crowd of undistinguished houses. Let him, in like manner, imagine Cork ; and he sees only a mass of undistinguished houses, clothing the heights and hollows of the ground, and drilled with wide avenues. In Cork, there are no public buildings that deserve the name. There are no points which engage the attention individually, and fasten upon the memory. Our impressions therefore are vague and unsatisfactory, and when questioned upon the subject, we answer indefinitely—"Cork is a very fine city."

I cannot say that I was struck, as others have been, with the respectable appearance of the lower classes of Cork. I saw as many beggars as any



where else, and as many marks of poverty and destitution. A man who assisted in putting the horses to a coach before my windows was dressed in rags of the most brutish indecency. There is no excuse for this, when a needle and thread, or at least a pin, might have been had for asking. The man himself was strong, healthy, and merry-looking, and I am convinced he wanted nothing but a sound whipping to make him cover his skin. I have said enough, however, about the callousness of the peasantry ; and I now remark, for the benefit of the authorities of Cork, that an English lady, if she found herself betrayed into approaching such an object, would either turn back, or cross over and pass on the other side.

Having satisfied my curiosity with the Cork of "genteel people," which, owing to the want of public buildings, may be done in a very short time, I began my perambulations in the city of the poor. Even here I found the streets broad and well-aired. The English reader, however, supposing him to be unacquainted with the country, knows nothing of the appearance of the suburbs, or more distant quarters of an Irish city. He pictures to himself only houses of the same kind as the others, but smaller, and meaner ; and perhaps he adds, by way of a still farther mark of distinction, a little garden of two or three yards of ground before the door, planted with sunflowers and hollyhocks, and a geranium pot in the window.

The suburbs of Cork, however, are formed of long and broad streets of thatched cottages, each resembling a village of the interior in every thing but its irregularity. This is a very striking peculiarity; and not confined in Ireland to Cork. In London, the houses of the meaner and more distant streets are merely miniatures of those of the greater—the comfort and elegance, of course, diminished in the same ratio as the size; and they are at once presumed to be the abodes of artizans and others of a similar grade. In an Irish suburb you may fancy yourself in a distant village, inhabited by the poorest of the peasantry; and, when a turning of the street brings into your view the palaces of city wealth, the contrast is startling. Upon the whole, I think Cork, even in such quarters, is much cleaner and more comfortable than Dublin; and this I can say with the greater confidence, as I pried into every opening which had the appearance of a thoroughfare, and sometimes into places where, judging from the exclamations of the people, the *quality* (as they call every body whose hat has a crown to it, and whose coat is whole and clean) are unfrequent visitors.

But the river is the grand object of attraction at Cork; and, accordingly, on the morning of a very fine day, I set out in a steamer for the island of Cove. The Irish fine day is, in my opinion, the finest day in the world. It would be the most disagreeable of all days, a bright hot day—only it is







*Die Burg von Brödel*

*von R. Brödel*

not: for the light and heat are both deliciously mellowed by the water-clouds, which are between you and the sun. Were it not for this protection, I am sure that in my rambles among the Wicklow hills, during the whole of which time there was not a drop of rain, I should have gone to heaven by evaporation.

The irregular course of the estuary makes this little voyage extremely delightful; for, every now and then, a new picture, or a new combination, presents itself. On the left are ranged the variegated heights of Glenmire, covered with woods, and dotted with villas; on the right is a flatter country, but equally rich, terminating after some time with Black Rock Castle, standing out like a watch-tower. Of this part of the river a beautiful view is annexed, which, I beg leave to say, is also a beautiful view of the *fine weather* of Ireland. This peculiarity of sky and tone will be observed in almost all the engravings in the volume; and, indeed, it could not have escaped the quick eye, and delicate pencil, of Mr. Creswick.

Black Rock Castle is a very conspicuous object from many points of view, both in ascending and descending the river; but the expectations of the stranger are disappointed on approaching it. Its air of authority vanishes by degrees; till at length, when just passing it, it becomes petite and *nick-nackish*. Although modernized, however, it was originally built in the time of James I., at the same

time with the fort of Hallboulting. The mayors of Cork are the admirals of the river, and it is here they hold their court. Here, also, in the manner of their brethren at London, they have a grand annual entertainment at the expense of the city.

Further on, on the same side, is the village of Passage, just where the island of Cove, planting itself in the middle of the estuary, leaves only a narrow channel. This channel is what, I presume, is called the Passage; and, in the brilliant view annexed, the reader will find a description, better than any that I could give, of its scenery. It is here the larger class of vessels discharge their cargoes into smaller ones, which carry them up to the city.

At the end of this narrow channel, on turning Battery Point sharply to the left, we enter into what is properly called the Harbour; and here, the character of the scene changes, though without losing its beauty, into something more than beautiful. The harbour, into which we run, is a fine expanse of water, resembling a great lake, with two fortified islands on the right; and the town of Cove, rising amphitheatrically on its steep hill, on the left. Only a very few vessels were in the space between; but, before my mind's eye, there swam one of the vast fleets which rendezvous here in time of war, and touched the majestic repose of the scene with sublimity. This noble harbour has a convenient entrance from the sea; but is, in other







*Cork from Cork*

respects, completely shut in by the land. I cannot conceive a place better fitted for the rendezvous of the ships of a great and warlike nation—

“ Whose march is o’er the mountain wave ;  
Whose home is on the deep.”

I landed at the little town of Cove, which rises in irregular terraces, on the side of a steep hill. From a fishing village it grew into importance, owing to the advantages of its situation ; and, had the war continued, it might by this time have been a great town. It is clean, however, looks to the south, and enjoys the reputation of a mild and salubrious climate, equal, if not superior, to that of some more celebrated places in the south of Europe. Let not the invalid, however, whose constitution or complaint requires a dry atmosphere, be tempted to settle in Ireland. There are, no doubt, some quarters better in this respect than others ; but all, in my opinion, are moist to a degree injurious to the health of those who have not been inured to the climate from their birth. I can speak of this from personal experience in the north of Ireland.

The engraving contains a view of Cove from the opposite side to that by which I approached it. The street rising up to the right leads to the church ; and in that direction I took my way, in order to have a stroll through the island before



returning to Cork. The beauty of this island, however, is all external. The interior is singularly uninteresting ; and, after a long walk, I found myself at the ferry opposite Passage.

It was Sunday ; and, when I crossed the river, the crowd of jingles in waiting was immense. They did not seem to me to be a class of carriages adapted for the conveyance of what are called in London, "respectable people ;" and I was surprised to find the other ranks in Ireland able to afford a carriage at all. The mystery, however, was explained when I came to make a bargain ; the fare demanded from Passage to Cork, a distance of seven or eight miles, being *one shilling* ! I found the road crowded with similar conveyances, thinly intermingled with private equipages, all going towards Passage. The pedestrians were comparatively few. The manners of the people were very different from those of the Londoners who "go a-pleasuring" on Sunday. There was an expression of buoyancy which would have pleased me had it been less rude ; but without the insipid gravity of the English citizen, they wanted the quiet gaiety of the French. All this I saw from the single window of the jingle, which (to speak Irish) is the door ; and which enabled me to look into other people's doors, when they passed me. But, getting tired of this amusement, to the no small amazement of the driver, I released him from his engagement when about half-way ; and I

saw him pick up another fare with the greatest ease.

I left Cork for Clonmel by one of the public cars, now so well known, that were established by Mr. Bianconi. This person, from an itinerant printseller, has become a man of great and deserved consequence; and, indeed, I hardly know the individual to whom Ireland owes more. It is calculated that he has upwards of three hundred horses; gives employment to upwards of one hundred and twenty families; causes a consumption of above nine hundred tons of hay, and twelve hundred barrels of oats annually; and that his cars travel above eighteen hundred miles daily. He does much more than this, however; he brings down, and keeps down, by his competition, the fares of the coaches; enables those to travel who either could not afford to travel at all, or must walk at a ruinous expense of time; and opens, to the gradual influx of wealth and civilization, a portion of the kingdom which, for all useful purposes, was a *terra incognita* before. Can he do more than this? Yes; he reads a lesson of humanity to travellers, by ordering his drivers, when there is any room in the vehicle, to take up, without charge, such pedestrians as appear poor and fatigued, and especially every woman walking with a child in her arms.

I think stage cars would succeed in England. They are cheap and simple in construction; there

is no chance of their upsetting ; and they are mounted without difficulty. For females, more especially, as well as old people of both sexes, they would be incomparably better than the outside of a coach. The subject reminds me of a conversation I had with a carman in Dublin, a fine young fellow, but miserably shabby, who seemed to have a very strong notion of taking his car over the channel, and trying it upon the streets of London.



## CHAPTER XII.

County Tipperary—Picturesque of the Bog of Allen—Turf-cutter's Hut—Subterranean Treasures of the Bogs—The Sea-bent—Clonmel—Connexion between Money and Virtue in Ireland—Religion—Swaddlers—Interesting Historical Anecdote—An Irish Village Romance—Mercenary Marriages, and their Advantages—Funerals, Ancient and Modern—The Ullaloo—Popular Romances.

ONE always thinks of the county Tipperary as the most Irish of all Irish counties; and I remember when I travelled on this road for the first time, I looked sharply about for the peculiarities I was prepared to expect. On the present occasion, however, after passing the lonely hills which divide Cork from Tipperary, there was nothing even in the external aspect of the country to arrest very strongly my attention. This is the district of Ireland, notwithstanding, where the most frequent outrages are committed; where abductions are most common; and where hereditary feuds of names, families, and villages flourish to this day.

The soil, however, is among the most fertile in the whole country ; the green of the fields is that of the emerald ;

And all, save the spirit of man, is divine.

Were I not restricted in these sketches to a particular line, and cribbed in point of space, I should be glad if the reader would accompany me to more than one place in this county ; but on the present occasion this must not be. I cannot, however, refrain from adverting to an interesting conversation which took place between two of my fellow-travellers on the car ; and which recalled to my recollection a scene, which I thought at the time I saw it still more striking of its kind than the beautiful estuary of the Lee, the romantic Blackwater, or the picturesque hills of Wicklow.

Not that I mean to say the Bog of Allen—for that is the scene alluded to—presents no specimen of the picturesque. On the contrary, I think the pencil of an artist of feeling and fancy could be nowhere better employed. And in this I do not allude to the oases in the desert—the patches of reclaimed land—the villages, and even towns, which diversify the bosom of a waste occupying a greater or less portion of eight of the counties of Ireland. I mean the Bog itself, the dreary expanse of brown heath-like herbage, springing like the

ghost of vegetation from what once was vegetable mould. Imagine a plain of this kind, extending as far as the eye can reach, with pools or lakes of black water gleaming in the midst. Place in the foreground—what you will frequently see—a hut of the most miserable kind, the walls of black turf, the timber of the decayed wood of the bog, the smoke oozing from the roof. Scatter three or four naked children around the door; the mother working at a small patch of grass or corn by the side of the hut; and the father a little way off at his daily occupation, in the pit where he is digging, with only his head visible above the soil. There is no other habitation near; no other signs of life from horizon to horizon. Such is the picturesque of the Bog of Allen.

Like the cabins of the peasantry which I have described as being built against the wall or dyke of the road, the turf-cutter's hut sometimes derives in like manner, one, two, or three of its sides from a turf-bank. It is occasionally, indeed, imbedded in the bank, with only the door-way free, and its roof very little elevated above the surface of the soil. In this situation, the inhabitants enjoy as good health as elsewhere — my informant said better; a fact which is attributed to the antiseptic quality of the bog.

The Bog of Allen is said to have at one time covered a million of acres; although at present its surface does not comprehend above a third part of



that extent. It has been chiefly brought under cultivation by drainage; to which the Grand canal and the Royal canal have contributed much; but a good deal is also done, although almost imperceptibly, by the ceaseless encroachments of the turf-cutters. One fact is very curious, that no vegetable mould, properly so called, is found in the Bog; the bottom being formed exclusively of clay or gravel. The bog, therefore, appears to exercise the same destructive, or rather absorbent, effect over vegetable mould, which it does over the bark of trees; and it may be a question, therefore, whether, in reclaiming such lands, a substratum of bog should be left at all.

The timber found in the bog is chiefly fir and oak; but also sometimes the remains of animals, and even implements of human labour. In this waste, therefore, there grew at one time woods and forests, and it was inhabited by human beings. Among the animal remains, there are antlers of gigantic size, so common in various parts of the island, that they are known to the peasantry as the "old deer." Near Tipperary, a pair of these antlers were used as a field-gate. In Charlemont-house, Dublin, there is another pair, which are said to have served as a bridge across a rivulet in Tyrone. The grandest specimen, however, of such wonders of old creation, because the most entire, is the fossil deer in the museum of the Royal Society of Dublin. The antlers of this magnificent

creature extend six feet on each side of its head, and are very nearly as broad as they are long !

The work of reclaiming goes on, although not half so quickly as it ought to do. I may mention, however, that several parts of the Bog of Allen, supposed but a very short time ago to be of no value whatever, now let freely at thirty shillings an acre. On those estates, also, on the shores of the sea, where sand is the enemy of vegetation, the sea bent is beginning to be used with effect in Ireland. This is a sort of reed, or coarse grass, to which the Dutch are much indebted, the roots of which, twisting themselves among the sands, form at length a barrier impassable by the sea. It has long been used on the coast of Norfolk and elsewhere in England ; but, I believe, is only of recent introduction in Ireland. At Liffoney, an estate of Lord Palmerston on the Bay of Donegal, the invasion of the sea has been effectually stopped by this simple expedient, and several hundred acres of sand converted into fine pasture-land.

But if the sand is set at liberty from its confinement by the bent grass, the work of years may be overthrown at a blow, and desolation again resume its reign. The following scene, described by the author of "Sketches in the North and South of Ireland," was caused by nothing more than rabbits burrowing under the sand.

"Northward of Dow Castle lay the sands of Rosapenna, a scene that almost realized in Ireland

the sandy desert of Arabia; a line of coast and country extending from the sea deep into the land, until it almost meets the mountain on which we stood, and exhibiting one wide waste of red sand; for miles not a blade of grass, not a particle of verdure, hills and dales, and undulating swells, smooth, solitary, desolate, reflecting the sun from this polished surface of one uniform and flesh-like hue. Fifty years ago, this line of coast was as highly improved in its way as Ards on the opposite side of the bay now is;—it was the highly-ornamented demesne, and contained the comfortable mansion, of Lord Boyne, an old-fashioned manorial house and gardens, planted and laid out in the taste of that time, with avenues, terraces, hedges, and statues, surrounded with walled parks, and altogether the first residence of a nobleman—the country around a great sheep-walk.

“Now not a vestige of all this was to be seen; one common waste of sand, one undistinguished ruin covers all. Where is the house? under the sand:—where the trees, the walks, the terraces, the green parks, and sheep-walks? all under the sand. Lately the top of the house was visible, and the country people used to descend by the roof into some of the apartments that were not filled up; but now nothing is to be seen. The spirit of the Western Ocean has risen in his wrath, and realized here the description Bruce gives of the moving pillars of sand in the desert of Sennaar; or it



recalls to memory the grand description which Darwin gives of the destruction of the army of Cambyses in the Nubian desert."

Without having met anything specially worthy of record in a book of this kind, I arrived at Clonmel, the largest town in Tipperary, and one of the most business-like places in Ireland. There is nothing extraordinary in its architecture, or in the general appearance of the town; and yet it arrests the attention of the traveller by its indications, not so much of wealth as of industry. Everybody appears to have something to do, and to think of. The poorer classes are not the Pariah caste of society, as we see them elsewhere in Ireland; they are an integral portion of the community, only different from the other by the part assigned them in the distribution of labour.

The cause of the prosperity of Clonmel is undoubtedly its physical situation, which makes it a great entrepot. Business flowed upon the town without being sought; and there being business to do, the people did it. Habits of industry were insensibly generated; with industry came wealth, or at least ease in living; and with all these, as a matter of course, came respectability of conduct and character. Poets may sneer at money, and cry—

——— get money, money still;  
And then let virtue follow if she will!

but money produces the kind of virtue we are talking of, as sure as industry produces money. Where are the religious feuds of Clonmel? The people have something else to do than quarrel; and as for purely political disturbances, they exist nowhere in Ireland. There is not a more disorderly set of people in the world than the English, when they are out of work; and if as great a proportion of the people of England were in this state as of the people of Ireland, there would be a revolution in less than three months, that would turn the country upside down. Do not think we should get off, as heretofore, with inflammatory speeches from the hustings—with parades of banners, and loaves of bread stuck on the point of a pike—or even with the conspiracy of half a dozen poor devils to fire a pistol at the Tower of London! In my opinion, the great danger of England is not from the conduct of lords or commons, but from a reflux of the tide of employment. When we are no longer the first commercial and manufacturing nation in the world; when the great majority of our *poorer classes* have no longer abundance of white bread, and beef, and beer—*then* will our legislators learn how to appreciate the forbearance of the peasantry of Ireland.

There is no doubt that there is a strong religious feeling in the southern counties; but actual disturbances are now very rare. Even in Clonmel, where there is a greater proportion of Protestants

than usual, the Catholics are five to one ; and a conflict between such parties is, of course, out of the question. In the northern counties, on the other hand, where the numbers are equal, or the Protestants have the majority, the manifestations of bad feeling are much more serious. I do not think that this feeling is decreasing, but the contrary. In Ireland, as well as in certain parts of Scotland, there has for some years past been progressing, among the Protestants, an ultraism in religion, known in the former country by the name of *swaddling*. This does no harm—and for aught I know it may do some good—in Scotland ; but in Ireland everything seems to be converted into an instrument of wrath. One would think that they had mistaken Mohammed for Christ ; and that instead of the bloody and triumphant Crescent, they had chosen *by mistake* for their standard the humble Cross, the instrument of shame and death, and the type of long-suffering, meekness, and humiliation. I once knew a gentleman in Sligo who was at once a distinguished swaddler, and in society a respectable and amiable man. We were both permitted to occupy a seat in the Provost's pew ; and I could hear him, Sunday after Sunday, groaning forth the responses in a rich, sonorous voice, which was heard over the whole of that part of the church. This was at the time when it was uncertain whether the Catholic Emancipation Bill was to pass quietly or not ; and one Sunday



morning there arrived some very interesting news on the subject.

“What are we to do with the Catholics now, Major ——?” whispered I, hardly waiting, in my impatience, till he had risen from his knees.

“Give them the bayonet to the hilt!” replied the devotee, showing his teeth like a hyena.

From what I have said respecting Clonmel, it will be gathered that there is but little of the romantic about the town, or its manners; although the neighbouring scenery of the Suir may boast a good deal of the picturesque. In history, however, the town plays a conspicuous part; and it affords at least one anecdote of Roman dignity and valour. It refers to the epoch of a still greater swaddler than my old acquaintance Major ——.

In the year 1650, Clonmel was maintained by Hugh O’Neal, with a garrison of twelve hundred men, against the whole force of Cromwell. The Earl of Ormond attempted various diversions in favour of the besieged, but with indifferent success; for his troops, inferior in number and discipline, were easily put to flight by the English. They returned again and again, however, to the struggle; and from all parts of the country-side were seen groups of peasants flocking towards a common centre, where the remains of the defeated army,

Though few and faint, were fearless still!

The chief author of this fermentation among the people was Boethius M'Eagan, the Roman Catholic bishop of Ross. He not only cheered, exhorted, and animated his countrymen, but led them on in person; and continued to do so till he was taken prisoner by the enemy. His captor was Lord Broghill, a Parliamentary general of great skill and courage; who hoped to derive more advantage from having this distinguished man in his hands than the mere pleasure of putting him to death. He therefore offered him his liberty, on condition that he would use his spiritual authority with the garrison of a fort called Carrickdrogid, near the field of battle.

The prelate consented. As for authority, he had none; but he would at least try how far his influence would go with his unhappy countrymen. He was led to the fort, and its astonished garrison summoned to hear the mediation of their so lately brave and indefatigable leader.

"Listen to me," said the bishop, "for I speak at once as your friend, your countryman, and your spiritual father. I conjure you, in the name of the most high God—in the name of our holy religion—by the country which gave you birth—by the spirits of the heroes that have fallen in her cause—to bury yourselves in the ruins of that fort, rather than tarnish, by surrendering it, your name, your honour, and your faith! And now for the scaf-

fold !” continued he, turning with a smile to Lord Broghill. The general was unhappily a mere soldier, and he ordered the immediate execution of his prisoner. Boethius M'Eagan was tied up to a branch of a tree, which grew near the spot, and confirmed the lesson of heroism he had just given with his blood.

From Clonmel I went on to Kilkenny, passing through several miserable villages situated in a picturesque country. In one of these, which I think was called Graan, a family tumult was at its height in one of the cottages as I passed by. A fine-looking young man, who seemed to be in a towering passion, was endeavouring, though in vain, to obtain entrance ; and I learnt from one of the bystanders as much as gave me to understand that I was just in time to witness the denouement of an Irish village romance.

Two young people, it seems, the girl only sixteen, and the youth not more than nineteen, were to have been married that day. The match—when it was made—was equal ; the lover possessing a hut and pig, and his mistress a table, a stool, an iron pot, and a counterpane. The hut, however, it must be said, was in such a condition, that it was supposed the young pair would be obliged to live with the father of the bride till it could be made water-tight. However, all went on well. The fees of the priest were borrowed ; the



two families had collected whisky enough between them for the entertainment; and the happy day arrived. But, alas!

The course of true love never did run smooth!

On the evening before the fateful day, the bridegroom's pig died!

This melancholy accident changed the whole face of affairs. The bargain had not been made that Patrick should marry Sheelah, but in the true "quality" form, that Patrick, possessing a pig and a hut, should marry Sheelah, possessing a table, a stool, an iron pot, and a counterpane. The pig was dead; Patrick no longer possessed a pig; and therefore he was no longer the Patrick of the agreement, the betrothed of Sheelah. The bride's father was inexorable; the bridegroom's friends were sorry, but thought it nothing more than fair; and all but Patrick and Sheelah were satisfied.

At the moment I passed, Patrick was endeavouring to obtain entrance into his mistress's house, "to explain the rights of it,"—now challenging her brothers to come out and fight with him—and now swearing "thunder and turf!" "blood and thunder!" and all manner of thunders. This conduct, however, was thought out of rule by the bystanders; he was evidently considered to act ungenteelly; and it was told to me as an un-

common, not to say scandalous circumstance, that Sheelah, guarded by her mother, was all the while weeping bitterly in the interior. Here the romance ended ; and the reader will think it continued long enough, when I inform him, that if Patrick had consented to give up a portion of the bride's *fortune* in lieu of the pig, he would have been united to his Sheelah as if nothing had happened. As it was, a youth from a neighbouring village, who possessed a *live* pig, offered for the heiress (whom he had never seen), on the same day ; whereupon Sheelah instantly left off crying, and in due time the amended marriage was carried into effect.

I have remarked in an earlier part of this volume that when the contracting parties have nothing but their persons to include in the contract, the affections have fair play, and that love-matches take place as in other countries. I now fear, however, that a natural leaning in favour of romance carried me too far. I do not believe that the Irish peasant, generally speaking, is placed in such circumstances as admit of the development of the passion of love, as contra-distinguished from the mere animal sensation. Family and conjugal affection are almost universal in this class of society ; but love is of rare occurrence. "Love in a cottage" is common ; but this is conjugal love ; this is the tie which binds two persons together, suffering the same hardships, and labouring to the same end. It is, in fact, a species

of selfishness. But love, which selects its object from the crowd of the human race, which worships it, like an idol of old, with sacrifices, must be here almost unknown. Yet do not misunderstand me. This passion, I allow, may exist in the midst of poverty, misfortune, disgrace, danger; but I exclude from the sphere of its operations hunger, and hopeless penury.

The system of mercenary marriages in Ireland is so far advantageous, that it frequently generates a spirit of economy and saving. A farmer in good circumstances will often deny himself many little luxuries in order to be able to portion his daughter, whom he is aware he cannot get married without a portion. In the towns, I have heard servant girls remark, that it would be absurd in them to expect a husband, since they had not wherewith even to buy a pig; and these girls, I have no doubt, would withstand the temptation of a ribbon much better than if no such idea were present in their thoughts.

Enough is known of the wretchedness of Callen, and therefore I shall say nothing about it. Between this place and Ballymack I met with a funeral of the poorest description. The coffin was in a common country cart, in which several women were bending over it, uttering at times a low cry, like the ghost of the Ullaloo. This lament has gone almost completely out of use, and I think I have heard it only twice in Ireland. The first time,



however, it was given out boldly ; and, as the wail rose among the desert hills of Connaught, the effect was thrilling. On the present occasion, it had degenerated into a kind of whine, like that emitted by a dog ; and it reminded me by contrast of the imposing ceremony whence it derived its origin.

The “setting of a star in Israel ” was an event of no small importance in the olden time ; and multitudes gathered round the house of death from far and near. The body was watched at night—but with ceremonies very different from those of a modern wake. It was placed on a bier, or a table, in the middle of the room, dressed in its grave clothes, sprinkled with flowers ; and the relations and mourners were ranged beside it in two divisions, one at the head and the other at the foot. The funeral Caionan had already been prepared by the bards and croteries ; and all was ready.

Then arose a low and doleful sound from the chief bard of the chorus at the head of the bier. It was the first stanza of the song of the dead, accompanied by soft touches of the harp ; and at its conclusion, the semi-chorus at the foot raised the lament, or Ullaloo ; which being answered by the semi-chorus at the head, a general wail arose from the whole. The chief bard of the foot chorus then went on with the second stanza, and the Ullaloo was commenced at the opposite end. And thus they went on, singing stanzas alternately, throughout the night.







The genealogy, the rank, the possessions, the virtues of the deceased, all were rehearsed in their songs, and various questions addressed to the body. Why didst thou die? Was the wife of thy bosom faithful? Were thy sons dutiful? Were they skilful in the chase, and brave in the battle? If a woman was the subject of the lament, she was asked, whether her daughters were fair and chaste? If a young man, whether he had been crossed in love, and whether his fate had been hastened by the scorn of the blue-eyed maids of Erin? At the conclusion, the body was carried to the place of interment accompanied by the cries of women, who sung at intervals the chorus of the *Caoinan*. At the decline of the bards, this duty fell entirely into the hands of women; and, unassisted by education, their efforts became extempore. Gradually the poetical part ceased altogether; and all that came down of the *Caoinan* to our day was the wild *Ullaloo*. This was different in each of the provinces; and the Ulster cry, the Munster, the Connaught, the Leinster, might have been distinguished by the ear at a distance.

Walker gives a long specimen of a *Caoinan* in the Transactions of the Royal Hibernian Society, but it is more curious than interesting; and, in fact, would almost lead one to suspect that Spenser was more charitable than poets usually are in his praise of the songs of the Irish bards. The following brief lament, however, is natural and affecting.

It is supposed to be uttered by the famous Fin M'Comhal over his grandson Oscar, slain in the third century ; but both poetry and music are attributed to the fifteenth.

O my own youth ! youth of my youth ! child of my child ! gentle,  
valiant !  
My heart cries like a blackbird. For ever gone ! Never to rise ! O  
Oscar !

The Irish to this day are very fond of funerals. A procession of the kind increases as it flows along ; every one it meets turning and accompanying it, if not to the cemetery, at least for a certain distance. I have frequently observed evidences in these casual mourners of what appeared to be sincere sympathy with the family. Indeed the Irish are the most social people I ever saw both in their joys and sorrows. Smiles kindle smiles, and tears beget tears, with unfailing certainty. If you indulge in a humorous sarcasm even at a beggar, the wretch smiles at the joke before he attempts to justify himself. The author of the "Philosophical Survey" affords me a sympathetic illustration. Being once at a fair in Ireland, he drew near a crowd to inquire into the cause of their lamentations. A woman, he heard, had lost a purse containing two shillings ; and relating her misfortunes, with many tears, to her neighbours who gathered about her, every one joined in her grief, till there arose a

“brightest and blackest” page of the history of Kilkenny belongs to the expedition of Oliver Cromwell. The progress of this successful general received a check before the little city which, it is said, surprised him. He first attempted to get possession of Irishtown, but was repulsed; and he then directed his force against the Castle, with the same bad fortune. His cannon, indeed, made a breach in the walls; but they could not subdue the spirit of the garrison, commanded by Sir Walter Butler, who beat back the assailants again and again. It is believed, indeed, that Cromwell, with whom economy of time was then all-important, thought of passing on without persevering in an attempt at once so difficult and so comparatively unimportant. At the critical moment, however, disunion and treachery—that national and hereditary curse of Ireland, far deadlier and more withering than the “curse of Cromwell”—did all that his arms had failed to effect.

The villagers and townsmen delivered Irishtown into his hands; and Sir Walter Butler, seeing that further resistance was unavailing, surrendered the next day. When the officers marched out, which they did on terms of honourable capitulation, Cromwell, in a fine soldierly spirit, which he did not often exhibit, complimented them on their bravery, attributing their bad fortune, not to his own prowess, but to the treachery of the townsmen.

Annexed is a view of the Castle from the river,



with one of the ancient towers in the centre of the piece. To see the town, however, as well as the castle, with all its interesting remains of antiquity grouped before the eye, the traveller should place himself on the upper bridge.

The condition of the inhabitants of this beautifully situated and *genteel* little city, appears, from a passing glance, to be somewhat worse than usual. I found more beggars in Kilkenny than in any other town of the size in Ireland. The inn-door was literally besieged by them from morning till night. I saw a gentleman, with not very considerate generosity, give a shilling to one poor woman as he stepped into the coach; while the traveller who followed distributed half the sum, bestowing a halfpenny upon each. The latter kind of donation seemed to accord best with the ideas of these social beggars; for I heard them remarking to each other, after the coach had driven off, that the donor was the only *raal* gentleman who had fallen in their way for a week.

I strolled in the evening along the *marble* pavements of the city, and into the miserable suburbs; and my daylight impressions of the poverty of the people were fully realized. The marble, if it was such at all, I could not tell from common stone; and yet the marble of Kilkenny, although not of the Parian colour, is as fine at least as any I have seen in Italy. They make a great work, by the way, at the Seven Churches of some bits of foreign

general chorus of weeping. Even the men who stood near could not repress the drops of sympathy that started to their eyes.

United with this sympathy, although it may seem a contradiction, the Irish are yet naturally a satirical people. The stories you will hear most frequently in the cottages, or among a group of idlers sitting on the green, describe the tricks practised successfully by one of their own order upon patrician gullability. They have also, or had very lately (for I have not witnessed it myself), a kind of comedy usually performed at weddings, or other festive occasions, the object of which is to turn into ridicule the English character. These exhibitions I have no doubt might be traced back to the wars antecedent to the conquest, and were an ebullition of political feeling on the part of the people. One of these is called *Sir Sop*, or the *Knight of Straw*, and its gist lies in the melancholy contrast in wit, courage, dress, and appearance presented by the English to the Irish worthy. The part of the Irish knight is enacted by the finest looking youth in the village; while *Sir Sop* is a mean little fellow, with a helmet of straw. This reminds one of the dramatic satire on the European person and manners which Clapperton met with in central Africa.

I have ventured to talk in terms of reprehension of the taste in romance which prevails at the present day in Ireland. But perhaps, after all, the

most disagreeable thing is the closeness of the spelling with which it is thought necessary to render the dialect. In the works of Sir Walter Scott, on the other hand, although the Scottish words and phrases are faithfully given, the English words are rarely misspelt to suit the pronunciation of the people. If this distinction is attended to, I have no doubt that it will benefit both the circulation and duration of many works of true genius. At the same time I must confess that there are many little pieces in which it would be sacrilege to alter a letter; and, among them, perhaps it will not be thought invidious to mention Mr. Lover's capital story of the "Gridiron."

The earlier romances of the Irish had, no doubt, the same origin with those of most of the other European nations. Their giants and dwarfs were descendants of those imported from the East by the crusaders and pilgrims. Walker traces a close similarity between the story of Rustan, by the Persian poet Ferdusi, so much praised by Sir William Ouseley, and the Irish tale of Conloch. I am inclined, however, to give the preference to the Irish modification, at least so far as the conception goes, for I cannot judge of the execution of either. In the Persian, the two knights encounter without knowing that they are father and son till one is mortally wounded. In the Irish, the young adventurer discovers before the conflict that his antagonist is his father, but his knightly honour will not suffer



him to withdraw the challenge he had given to the Finian chiefs. In both romances the youth is slain.

A taste for such stories was as common in Ireland as in any of the countries of the East; and I cannot do better than conclude this notice with the comparatively late testimony of Sir William Temple.

“A very gallant gentleman of the north of Ireland,” says he, “told me, that in his wolf-huntings there, when he used to be abroad in the mountains three or four days together, and being very ill a-nights, so as he could not well sleep, they would bring one of the tale-tellers, that, when he lay down, would begin a story of a king, or a giant, or a dwarf, or a damsel, and such rambling stuff; and continue it all night long, in such an even tone, that you heard it going on whenever you awaked.”

### CHAPTER XIII.

Kilkenny—Ancient Irish Cloak—Cathedral of St. Canice—Round Tower—Ecclesiastical Ruins—Market Cross—Witchcraft—Mysteries—Statutes against Actors—Castle of Kilkenny—Heroism and Treachery—Condition of the Inhabitants—Cave of Dromore—Carlow—Repeal of the Union—Mr. O'Connell and Agitation—The Rent—Carlow Castle.

I do not know that there is any place in Ireland more pleasing in an outside view than the little inland city of Kilkenny. It stands on the river Nore, and on two small hills, one dominated by the cathedral, and the other by the castle. The streets on the former are called Irish Town; of the latter, English Town—and *they* of course are the best. The *picture*, however, is entire and complete; the castle being the principal object, with the other parts of the town grouped around it, as if by the taste of an artist. Independently of the picturesque, there is an aristocratical air about the place which leads one to expect at least gentility; and it is with

no small revulsion of feeling that the traveller sees on entering the very same misery, if not a little more, that shocked him elsewhere.

The circumstance may have been accidental, but in approaching Kilkenny, I met with more cloaks than I had seen all the way from Cork. The gown beneath, I admit, was not better, but rather worse than usual ; and yet the cloak gave the same imposing character to the figures that the picturesque grouping did to the town. I should like to know the history of this garment. I am inclined to think that it is the same which was at one time worn by the men, before it was abandoned by that unpoetical sex for the blackguard-looking greatcoat. Spencer's description, however, of the cloak masculine, although in some sort poetical, is not favourable to its moral character.

"It is a fit house," says he, "for an outlaw, a meet bed for a rebel, and an apt cloak for a thief. First, the outlaw being for his many crimes and villanyes banished from the townes and houses of honest men, and wandering in waste places far from the danger of law, maketh his mantle his house, and under it covereth himself from the wrath of heaven, from the officers of the castle, and from the sight of men. When it raineth, it is his penthouse ; when it bloweth, it is his tent ; when it freezeth, it is his tabernacle. In summer he can wear it loose, in winter he can wrap it close : at all



times he can use it ; never heavy, never cumbersome.

“ Likewise for a rebel it is serviceable : for in his warre that he maketh (if at least it deserve the name of warre), where he still flyeth from the foe, and lurketh in the thicke woodes, and strait passages, waiting for advantages, it is his bed, yea, and almost his household stuff. For the wood is his house against all weathers, and the mantle is his couch to sleep in. Therein he wrappeth himself round, and coucheth himself strongly against the gnats, which, in that country, doe more annoy the naked rebels when they keep the woods, and doe more sharply wound them, than all their enemies’ swords or spears, which can seldom come nigh them : yea, and oftentimes their mantle serveth them when they are neere driven, being wrapped about their left arme, instead of a target, for it is hard to cut through with a sworde ; besides it is light to beare, light to throw away, and being (as they commonly are) naked, it is to them all in all.

“ Lastly, for a thiefe, it is so handsome as it may seem it was first invented for him, for under it he may cleanly convey any fit pillage that cometh handsomely in his way, and when he goeth abroad in the night in freebooting, it is his best and surest friend ; for lying, as they often do, two or three nights together abroad to watch for their booty,

with that they can prettily shroud themselves under a bush or bankside till they conveniently do their errand ; and when all is over, he can in his mantle pass through any town or company, being close-hooded over his head, as he useth, from knowledge of any of whom he is in danger. Besides this, he, or any man else that is disposed to mischief or villany, may, under his mantle, goe privily armed without suspicion of any, carry his head-piece, his skean, or pistol, if he please, to be always in readiness."

Kilkenny was made a city by James I., for the services it rendered him against the Irish rebels ; and this is enough of itself to stamp a character of gentility about a town. The Duke of Ormonde, besides, kept his court at a later period, with much more magnificence than was displayed by the viceroy ; and hence was generated a politeness not frequently met with in the Irish towns. This family affected great state down to modern times—and perhaps do at this moment. Dr. Watkinson mentions that the Duchess of his day maintained herself at the castle in the manner of a princess, holding a kind of levee, and receiving visits, but never returning any.

The most interesting vestige of antiquity here, although not dating further back than the twelfth century, is the Cathedral of St. Canice. It was much injured by Cromwell's soldiers ; and not thoroughly repaired till the time of Bishop Pococke,

in the middle of the last century. A short time previously, £700 was offered by the Pope's nuncio for the stained glass of one of the windows, and refused. The church is in the usual cruciform of the Gothic churches of that age ; with a thick square tower supported by massive columns. It contains some tombs of the Butlers and other distinguished families.

The view from the tower is extremely fine, for the place, as I have said, is picturesque ; the scenery of the Nore is beautiful ; and the whole is bound in at one point by mountains. But a Round Tower at your side, close to the cathedral almost to touching, is an object which fascinates the eye at once. It is one hundred and eight feet high, and forty-seven feet at the base ; and the entrance, as is usual in these singular structures, is at the distance of a good many feet from the ground. The ruin of the Dominican Abbey is also a striking object, and more especially of one of its towers. The Franciscan Abbey is near the river. The Priory of St. John, otherwise the Augustine Abbey, is now but as a part of the picture. I have seen views of it in the older books of travels ; and it appeared to me to be one of the most singular and beautiful buildings in the island. The wall was so filled with windows that it was called the "lanthorn of Ireland." Most of them are now stopped up, and the edifice has been converted into a parish church.

The Parliament House is also modernized ; and



the Market Cross inscribed with the date MCCC. has been altogether removed. I have not heard that there was any excuse whatever for this sacrilege. The Cross was, in itself, an elegant little Gothic erection ; but, independently of this, the associations of the spot are of a very striking character. It was here where, early in the fourteenth century, a young woman was burnt for witchcraft. The prosecutor was the Bishop of Ossory, and the principal defendant the Lady Alice Kettel, with her accomplices Petronilla and Basilia. They were accused of evoking by enchantment a fiend called Robert Artisson, for the important purpose of getting him to sweep the filth from the streets of Kilkenny to the door of the Lady Alice's son, that it might serve as manure. She also obtained from Robin a pot of ointment, by means of which she flew through the air, with her companions, to join a sabbath of witches in the Devil's Bit, in the county Tipperary.

The sacrifice used for inducing, or compelling, the attendance of the fiend, consisted of nine red cocks, slain in the middle of the road, and the eyes of nine peacocks—involving an outlay, one would think, greatly disproportioned to the expected benefit. However, the Lady Alice contrived to escape from justice beyond seas ; but poor Petronilla “passed through the fire to Moloch,” at the cross of Kilkenny.

In the sixteenth century, an exhibition of a very

different nature took place at the cross. This was the performance of mysteries under rather peculiar circumstances. The first pageantry of the kind we find expressly mentioned was exhibited at Dublin, in 1528 ; but there can be no doubt that they were already sufficiently common in Ireland, since in less than twenty-five years, so many corruptions had crept in as to provoke a bishop to write some, on purpose to put down the immorality and heresy of the rest. The two most remarkable pieces of Bale, Bishop of Ossory, were entitled “God’s Promise,” and “John the Baptist ;” and both were performed at the Cross of Kilkenny, on a Sunday, in 1552.

“God’s Promise” was written with the view of upholding the doctrine of grace against those who insisted upon free-will, and the efficacy of good works : and Adam, Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, David, and John the Baptist, were all brought upon the stage with God Almighty. In the prologue, supposed to be spoken by the author, he tells his audience, that it is not the common sort of mystery they are about to witness :—

“ You therefore (good fryndes) I lovingly exhort  
To waye soche matters as wyll be uttered here,  
Of whom ye maye loke to have no tryfling sporte  
In fantasyes fayned, not soche lyke gawdysh gere,  
But the thyngs that shall your inwarde stomake chear,  
To rejoyce in God for your justyfycacion,  
And alone in Christ to hope for your salvaeyon.”

He then gives each one shrewdly to understand,

that if he does not believe as he will find it forthwith set down, he will be damned—

“ ————— to his most high discomfort ! ”

The playwrights, however, though probably worsted in argument, were not silenced by the bishop ; and, at length, Queen Elizabeth took it in hand to combat these heresies in another way. She ordained, that if any person or persons should in any interludes, plays, songs, rhymes, or by other open words, speak or declare any thing in derogation, despising, or depraving of the book of Common Prayer, they should be fined for the first offence a hundred marks, for the second four hundred, and for the third should suffer forfeiture of goods and chattels, together with imprisonment for life.

In the time of Charles I., fencers, bearwards, common players of interludes, and minstrels wandering abroad, are classed with rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars, and other lewd and disorderly persons. It should be mentioned, however, for the credit of Irish civilization, that this stigma was thrown upon the dramatic amusements of only the lower classes ; for about the same time, a Master of the Revels was introduced at the Irish court, and John Ogilby, the first who held the office, erected a theatre in Dublin at his own expense.

The Castle of Kilkenny, overhanging a deep and



rapid river, in the middle of a town which seems to have been built as if for its drapery, must needs be a striking object. It was first erected in the twelfth century by the famous Earl of Pembroke, surnamed Strongbow ; but, being destroyed soon after, was rebuilt by the Lord Marshall, Earl of Pembroke. In 1391, it came by purchase into the noble family of Butler, and remains their principal residence till this day.

It may be supposed, from this brief history, that but little remains of the original edifice ; and, in fact, I believe there are only three round towers which date farther back than the close of the seventeenth century. Even these have suffered so many changes that the ghost of the Earl of Pembroke would hardly know them again. When the castle was rebuilt at the above period, by the first Duke of Ormond, although preserving the towers, he modernized them in the taste of a churchwarden ; and, although the present Marquis, while almost re-constructing the edifice, has attempted to restore them to their original character, it is hardly to be supposed that his success has been altogether complete. His lordship's labours are still going on ; and I was told that he has devoted an annual sum—six hundred pounds was the amount mentioned—to the object of rendering the building worthy of its historical fame.

In 1399, King Richard II. visited the castle, and was royally entertained for a fortnight : but the

marble intermingled with the common stones ; but in Wicklow they could not have had very far to go for this commodity. The Kilkenny coal burns to a red heat without flame or smoke, and in this state resembles the common coke. This explains one part of the couplet,

“Fire without stench, air without bog,  
Water without mud, and land without bog.”

As for the rest, the air here is said to be purer than elsewhere in Ireland ; the water of the Nore is beautifully transparent ; and the bogless state of the land helps out the rhyme.

There are some ruins in the neighbourhood of Kilkenny which the antiquary should visit, and a calcareous cavern, about the necessity of seeing which authors are not agreed. The author of the *Philosophical Survey* calls it a “bauble;” but then he was only an Englishman. Irish writers, on the other hand, represent it as being every thing most beautiful and sublime. I am not sorry that I omitted to visit the spot myself, as I should not like to get entangled in such a controversy ; but in order to show at least my goodwill to the country, I subjoin the testimony of the author of “*Crohoore of the Bill-hook.*”

“The absolute physiognomy of the place,” says

he, "is calculated to excite superstitious notions. In the midst of a level field, a precipitate inclined plane leads down to a sudden pit, across which, like a vast blind arch, the entrance yawns, about fifty feet perpendicular, and from thirty to forty wide, overhung and festooned with ivy, lichen, bramble, and a variety of wild shrubs, and tenanted by the owl, the daw, and the carrion crow, that make rustling and screaming exit into the daylight as soon as disturbed by an exploring foot; and when all at once you stand on the verge of the descent, and look from the cheering day into the pitch darkness of this gaping orifice, repelling and chilling the curiosity that it excited,—giving a promise of something to be discovered, and a threat to the discoverer,—suggesting a region to be traversed so different from our own fair familiar world, and yet a nameless danger to be incurred in the progress,—your heart must be either very callous or very bold, and imagination entirely a blank, if, at the first glance, you feel no unusual stir within you.

"After you enter the mouth of the cavern, the light of your torches shows you that vast masses of rock protrude overhead, ready at every step to crush, and held in their place as if by miracle alone. A short distance on, two separate passages branch to the right and to the left. To explore the one, a barrier of steep rocks, made



dangerous by the damp slime that covers them, should be scaled ; then you proceed along a way of considerable length, sometimes obliged, from the lowness of the heading, to stoop on hands and knees, still over slippery rocks, and over deep holes, formed by the constant dripping of the roof ; till at last you suddenly enter a spacious and lofty apartment, known by the name of the market-cross, from its containing a petrified mass that has some likeness to the ancient and curious structure, so called. Indeed, throughout the whole chamber, the awful frolic of nature bears comparison with art :—ranges of fluted columns, that seem the production of the chisel, only much dilapidated by time, rise almost at correct distances to the arching roof ; by the way, having necessarily been formed by petrification, drop upon drop, it is astounding to think of the incalculable number of years consumed in the process. And this is the regal fairy hall ; and the peasants say, that when the myriad crystallizations that hang about are, on a gala evening, illuminated, and when the for-ever falling drops sparkle in the fairy light, the scene becomes too dazzling for mortal vision.

“The other passage winds an equal distance, and leads to the subterranean rill that bubbles, as before mentioned, over scraps of human bones ; and over some entire ones, too ; we having, when led to the cavern for scenic illustration of the facts of this

history, adventurously plunged our hand into the clear water, and taken therefrom a tibia of unusual length; and, indeed, the fact that such human relics are there to be seen, almost a quarter of a mile from the light of the earth, must, if we reject the peasant's fine superstition, show us the misery of some former time of civil conflict, that could compel any wretched fugitive to seek, in the recesses and horrors of such a place, just as much pause as might serve him to starve, die, and rot."

I left Kilkenny for Carlow. A great part of the road is comparatively uninteresting; but between Leighlin and Carlow the country is delightful. This town is situated on the left bank of the Barrow, one of Spenser's three rivers—

"The first the gentle Shure, [Suir] that making way  
By sweet Clonmell, adorns rich Waterford;  
The next the stubborn Newre, [Nore] whose waters grey  
By fair Kilkenny and Ross ponte board;  
The third the goodly Barrow."

Carlow, although a town of between eleven and twelve thousand inhabitants, has a singularly retired and village-like air; and no one would suspect, from a first glance, that it is a place of considerable commercial importance. Its physical situation, like that of Clonmel, has made its fortune; for the Barrow, communicating at one end with the Suir

at Waterford, and at the other with the canal to Dublin, renders it a great entrepot. There being business to be done, as I remarked at Clonmel, the business *is* done. The Irish have no inherent laziness or barbarism. They are industrious when their industry meets an adequate reward; and hence Carlow has trebled its population and resources within the memory of the present generation.

While adverting to a subject which in this country must force itself upon every reflective person almost at every step, I am reminded, by the association of ideas, of a remark made by Mr. Inglis, "that so far as he had yet gone through the south of Ireland, he had found the whole of the lower classes, and a great proportion of the shopkeepers and farmers, Repealers." Is this one of the statements I can confirm—I who deny the existence of strong political feeling in Ireland? It is. The people are repealers to a man; because they are told, and believe, that repeal would give them food. It appears to their imaginations, not in the form of a political boon, but in that of a supply of potatoes and milk sufficient for the whole year round. "I have generally found, however," continues Mr. Inglis, "a readiness to admit, that if employment were provided for the people, repeal would lose its value." Undoubtedly it would! Repeal is a chimera which no well informed person can



seriously indulge for a moment ; but it is a means, and a most powerful one, of rousing the peasantry of Ireland into a hope, which, vague though it be, is better than no hope at all. They are not in a condition to examine arguments, or weigh possibilities. I am, in fact, perfectly convinced that a great many of them are ignorant of the very meaning of the word. They are like the boatful of negroes who were picked up at sea as they were voyaging in quest of the New Jerusalem.

It is hardly possible for one to get out of Ireland without a word concerning Mr. O'Connell and his agitation. Being no politician, I cannot hope that my opinions will be received with favour by any one party in the state ; and yet I cannot but think that the opinions of a plain unpretending man, with no interests or connexions to influence him, must be as well worth listening to by the public as those of a political partizan of a hundred times the talent.

That Mr. O'Connell's agitation will eventually do good to the great body of the people, I believe ; but that it has as yet done any, I deny. Mr. O'Connell has been *successful* in carrying some of his principal measures : and what is the result ? I see no change in the condition of the country since my last visit eleven years ago. The peasant does not eat a single potato more in the year ; in clothing he is still a beggar ; and the hovel in

which he lives is still a disgrace to civilized Europe. Nay, in some respects the lower classes are more uncomfortable than heretofore, for the result of the elections, by bringing forward certain popular candidates in the room of the old members, has almost entirely done away with the few ties of kindly feeling which still subsisted between the landlords and tenants.

The benefits of Irish agitation have hitherto been confined to the *gentry*;—a position which I dare any one to controvert. Such benefits, in the present state of the great majority of the population of Ireland, I, for one, care little about. I have no interest in asking what gentleman is in parliament? who wears a silk gown who had none before? Such benefits, had they no ulterior tendency, ought to be reckoned—always speaking comparatively—but paltry attainments at the best.

The grand benefit arising from Irish agitation is, the attention it has drawn towards the country and the condition of the inhabitants. This is an incalculable benefit, if we consider the taste of the age in which we live. Now-a-days the sentimental traveller is no longer contented with sentiment alone, or the picturesque traveller with the picturesque; the public demand something more; and facts—stubborn facts—appear even in pages as light as this. Ireland is now known, or is in the course of being so, as she is; and by and by, even

if Mr. O'Connell should gratify his enemies, and disappoint his friends, by showing that his calling has reference only to the real, or supposed, political grievances of his country, the great work will be snatched from his hands, and carried into effect by the moral power of the United Kingdom.

But still, I am far from being desirous of depreciating the real merit of Mr. O'Connell. His agitation has not only done the good I have specified; but he has built up the vantage-ground from which the efforts of the friends of Ireland can emanate with best effect. The voice of the country can now be heard as that of a great constituent part of the realm. Let him now, if he has a mind to live in history, wave all meaner points of political controversy. Let him be satisfied with what he has done for the *dignity* of his country, and henceforth turn his brilliant talents to the task of elevating her inhabitants to the dignity of European civilization. When the people of Ireland—and that is to say, the lower agricultural classes (the millions, as contradistinguished from the gentry, who are the thousands)—cease to lead a life of lingering starvation; when they are clothed in decent apparel; when their habitations are at least befitting homes for individuals of the human race—then will be time enough to agitate questions of political right.

If before this change takes place, Mr. O'Connell



shall use the influence he has acquired over the people, in the furtherance of objects unconnected with the amelioration of their moral and physical condition, or even not *proximately* connected with it—if he shall distract the attention of the friends of Ireland from her real wants by declamations on her speculative wrongs—then must his patriotism be termed hypocrisy, and his promises wilful delusions, and he must be set down himself as one of those heartless quacks and impostors, whose prototypes are to be found in the history of every ignorant and sanguine people.

As for the *rent*, all I can say is, that it is a fee paid by the people of Ireland to this eminent pleader; which amounts at most to something less than fourpence a head per annum from the adult males of the *lower* agricultural classes. Of what proportion this class is relieved by the contributions of other classes, I do not know; but I am myself acquainted with many persons who subscribe considerable sums for the benefit of Mr. O'Connell, and yet whose prejudices against him as an individual are very strong, and I should think very unjust. The priests are, of course, in favour of the rent; for Mr. O'Connell is a Catholic, and stands up more for the dignity of his religion than for the advantages either spiritual or bodily of its followers. They use their influence with their flock, no doubt with the customary zeal of the

Catholic priesthood ; but I am unable to say any thing upon this subject of my own knowledge. Upon the whole, I consider the rent, in so far as it is voluntary, to be far more honourable to Mr. O'Connell than a pension. It comes, however, or is supposed to come, from the starving classes, that is, from the great body of the people ; and I am anxious to know in what manner he will earn his fee for the next few years. Let him only remember on whose side he is retained, and I have no fear of the result. On the part of the people, the money is laid out wisely, even if it obtains for them only an hour's hope in the year : and, as for the damage they sustain by such an outlay, let any man divide that amount of potatoes into three hundred and sixty-five parts, and then say how far it will interfere with the daily bread of the contributors and their families !

But to return to Carlow. The river is navigable from Athy, where it joins the canal from Dublin, all the way to Waterford, after joining the Nore at New Ross. Its banks at Carlow have the beauty of fertility rather than of the picturesque. Rich fields of grain rejoice the eye of the traveller, and swelling pasture-lands, that rival

“——— the sweets of Burnhill meadow.”

The corn and butter trades are here, therefore, the

principal local business ; and the butter especially, averaging thirty thousand casks in the year, stands next in estimation to that of Holland in the London market. The public buildings of the town are new, and not remarkable ; not even the college, unless it be for conferring an undeserved character, both for politics and polemics, upon the place.

Carlow Castle was a square fortress, flanked at the corners by round towers, and surrounded by a wall, except at the Barrow, which formed the western enclosure. It was a place of great strength, as its ruins still testify ; the walls of which, at least of the towers, are upwards of seven feet thick. It has, altogether, a stern, massive, and warlike appearance, well befitting a place which underwent as many of the fortunes of war as any fortress in Ireland. It is said to have been founded in the twelfth century by Hugh de Lacy ; and there is nothing in its architecture to induce us to refuse credence to the date. The windows may have been enlarged ; the courtine wall may have been battlemented ; but still the shell stands ponderously simple, a monument of that olden time, when strength and security were the grand objects of architecture. This is the sole remains of antiquity which Carlow can boast of ; for the ruins of an abbey, founded here, it is said, in the seventh century, have now disappeared.



## CHAPTER XIV.

Return to the County Wicklow—Barony of Shillelagh—Baltinglass—Inquiry into what is called the Fatality of the Position of Ireland—Mistake as to what Class form the People—What must be done for the Peasantry—Glen of Imaal—Dwyer the Outlaw—Stratford-upon-Slaney—Lugnaquilla—The three Passes into the Wilds of Wicklow—Legend of the Donard Pass—Entrance into Glenmalur—The Glen of Lugnaquilla—Striking Catastrophe—Sacred Wells—The Demon's Hole—Return to Dublin—Concluding Reflections.

FROM Carlow, the traveller may either proceed to Dublin through the county Kildare, or the county Wicklow. The latter road is somewhat the shorter of the two; but I chose it, in order to have an opportunity of seeing the western part of the county, and thus rendering my description of this portion of Ireland as complete as the nature of the work will allow. Were it only on account of Glendalough alone, Wicklow must be considered one of the most interesting counties, if not *the* most interesting in the kingdom. Since the preceding sheets have gone to press, I find that Scott's

opinion was really such as I supposed it to be; as in an article in the Quarterly Review, known to be his, the spot is described as “that inestimably singular scene of Irish antiquities.”

The scenery of Wicklow, I have already said, is *petite*; and I can only explain what I mean to the travelled reader, by saying that it resembles in this character the “mountains of the Rhine.” The hills, or rocks, or eminences, which border that “abounding and exulting river,” are mountains to the imagination. They possess the form without the bulk, the majesty without the height, of the colossi of nature. Their grandeur does not arise from massiveness, but from shape and combination; and the whole is steeped in so rich and extraordinary a beauty, that we easily suppose the effect to be assisted in some measure by an intermingling of the sublime.

The finest parts of the country come within a single day's ride from the capital; and the pedestrian, before he has walked an hour, finds himself in the midst of seemingly interminable wilds, which reminded Sir Walter Scott of some of that scenery of his own country which his pen has rendered classic ground. On the road to Glencree, not more than four miles from the city, there is a desert of “brown heath, and shaggy wood,” and naked rock, where the traveller turns round to gaze at the cultivated country he is leaving, spread with

verdant fields, dotted with villas and cottages, and the horizon covered before him by the roofs, and domes, and spires of the city, and bounded on the right by the Bay of Dublin and the open sea. The transition is magnificent; and the distinguished visitor I have mentioned, described the view as, in this respect, the most remarkable he had ever beheld at a single glance.

The road I have mentioned, however, leads towards Lough Bray; from which a line drawn to Carnew at the southern extremity of the county would include, between it and the sea, nearly all the celebrated scenery of Wicklow. To the west of this line, the country is little known to the tourist; and, although it has features here and there both of beauty and grandeur, it is deficient, generally speaking, in the characteristics which render the other portion a grand Calvary (to use a Catholic metaphor) of stations for the pilgrims of the picturesque. This western part is formed, before the place where I re-entered Wicklow from Carlow, in no inconsiderable part by the barony of Shillelagh, which covers a tract of twenty-seven thousand acres. Here was the grand forest of oak, from which, in former times, great quantities of timber were exported for the purpose of roofing public buildings. In the course of degradation, universal in this country, the name is now associated only with that instrument with which the Irish



are in the habit of breaking one another's heads at a fair, or in honour of the birth-day of a saint. Carnew, the extreme southern point of the district, has the remains of a castle built by the O'Toole's, a famous family in this part of the country. The whole barony belongs to the Earl Fitzwilliam.

Proceeding along the Carlow road, I entered the County Wicklow, and soon after reached Baltinglass, a place which was once a city, and where Dermot M'Murchad, King of Leinster, was buried. Instead of the parliament, which is said to have sat in a castle near the town, the ruins of which are still standing, the assizes were held here in modern times, and gave the place an air of bustle and consequence. But these, too, have now been removed; and the shade of King M'Murchad glides through his old demesnes undisturbed but by the noise of far less offensive instruments than lawyers' tongues, mill-clappers. The name of the place, it seems, may mean either, "the fire of Beal's mysteries," or "the town of the grey houses," two very different things. The advocates of the former name point to the druidical remains in the neighbourhood, and even assert that Baltinglass was one of the principal colleges of this heathenish superstition. Those on the other side ask triumphantly, if any houses in the world can be *greyer* than the houses of Baltinglass? And, if this is all that is required to settle the dispute, the dispute is

settled. The houses are grey, extremely grey ; and, therefore Baltinglass is the town of the grey houses.

The Irish are still more enthusiastic in their claims of far descent than my own countrymen, the Scots ; a fact which Mr. Moore in his history accounts for, in poetical fashion, by supposing them to cling to the idea of antiquity, as a consolation to “ the wounded pride of a people for ever struggling against the fatality of their position.” This would do very well in the Irish Melodies ; but history abhors sentiment. There was no fatality in the position of Ireland at all, and there is none. She was in the position of a country destined, by her very geographical situation, to be absorbed into the body-politic of a greater country beside her. That she did not fall with dignity, and ultimately acquire all the privileges of her conquerors, was owing to there being no dignity in the attitude of her defence. She never opposed herself as a nation to a nation ; but as two or three barbarian hordes, each standing up for its own independence, and all ready and willing to betray and sacrifice the rest to the common enemy.

In the time even of Elizabeth, Ireland might have become an independent kingdom, which, although it must have fallen at last, it would have taken a century to subdue. Never was a country of her extent and population held down by so

insignificant a force, wielded for the greater part of that long reign by leaders so incapable; and, as the Irish are naturally brave, as well as lovers of freedom, the catastrophe can only be accounted for by their making no head, as an entire people, against the invaders. England was at that time poor, although some of the nobles were rich; a considerable part of the revenue of the sovereign was derived from "benevolences," or voluntary gifts; and there was no moral greatness in the character of the people to make them an overmatch for a generous and spirited nation, even if a nation of barbarians. The idea of liberty, indeed, was beginning to assume some form; and the "sleeping images," as Dryden expresses it, beginning to stir in the minds of men. All bowed, however, before the transmitted sceptre of despotism; a single look from the daughter of Henry VIII. was sufficient to strike noble and peasant alike to the ground; the royal table, even in the absence of the queen, was served on bended knee; and she was addressed, by the first spirits of the age, in terms which, when applied to a human being, become the most horrible profanity. The judges were the creatures of the court; they became removable and removed, at pleasure; trial by jury was a farce, because the jury could be imprisoned, and were imprisoned, if their verdict did not coincide with the charge of the judge; the Court-martial superseded, on the smallest occasion,



both judge and jury ; and the Star Chamber, a lay-inquisition far more tyrannical than the Private Chancery of the queen's namesake of Russia, flourished like a upas-tree.

What is the fatality in the present position of Ireland ? In Russia—to choose an extreme case of barbarism and tyranny—where there is a still broader distinction between noble and peasant, the peasants are as comfortably lodged, and fed, and taken care of, as if they were the hounds of their master ; and their burdens are so proportioned, that, with industry and good fortune, they may attain, and they often do attain, even to wealth. In Ireland, where the soil is more fertile, and the climate milder, and where the principal trade is the *ex*-port of provisions, six millions out of eight are starving. In neither country do the laws affect the condition of the peasant. In neither country are there poor-laws ; in neither country is there a fixed rent of land ;\* in neither country is there a fixed price of labour. Whence is it, then, that the landlords of Ireland, who are a small minority of the population, are as comfortable as the landlords of Russia, who are a very small minority of the population ; while the peasants of Ireland, who are the great majority, are infinitely more miserable than the peasants of Russia, who

\* Except in the Swedish provinces of Russia.

are the very great majority? Doubtless it is owing to fatality !

But Mr. Moore was not talking of the six millions and their fatality, but of the two millions. He did not advert to the naked, hungry, and destitute condition of the great majority of his countrymen, but to the “wounded pride” of certain gentlemen who could not sit in parliament, and wear silk gowns. However, according to the rule of all times, and all countries, the gentry must have the precedence ; and in Ireland they have had the precedence. Their wounded pride has been examined, medicined, nursed, and no doubt healed ; while millions of the other classes have been left to die around them of insufficient food, clothing, and lodging. Now comes the turn of the peasants. Agitation for them can offend no man who is worthy of the name. Let us agitate bravely—all of us, English, Scottish, and Irish ; with O’Connell at our head if he choose. But let this first be understood by all parties :—That he who shall in any manner swerve from our direct purpose—who shall slacken his efforts to save human life, in order to minister to wounded pride ; who shall attempt to distract the attention of the country from the moral and physical condition of the peasants of Ireland to mere political grievances—that he shall be denounced as the worst of traitors—that his agitation shall be called

sedition ; and that he shall be put down at once, not only by public scorn, but by the strong arm of the law.

To ameliorate the condition of the peasantry many things are required ; but I shall mention the principal.

Rack-rents and nominal rents must be done away with. The principal means of effecting this are, firstly, by diminishing the competition for land, which may be done by promoting emigration ; by opening new fields of labour ; by providing permanently for the infirm and aged, who at present bear down the able-bodied and industrious by their weight. Secondly, by inducing the co-operation of the landlords, which can only be effected by the dissemination of practical knowledge among the body ; and by introducing just views, not of their duty, which (generally speaking) they would disregard, but of their true interest and policy. This must be done, not in elaborate works, which they would not read, nor in picture-books, which they would not care for ; but in plain, practical, direct, and, above all, brief treatises.

In order to benefit by this boon—of a rent which it is possible to pay !—the peasant must not merely pay it, and live ; he must be taught how to stand an increase of rent, and to flourish the more as it rises, till the land attains to that value which it ought to bear in a fertile country, in the immediate



neighbourhood of a market capable of absorbing any quantity of produce. The means of imparting this knowledge are various; but here again the co-operation of the landlord is indispensable. It will not suffice to dispel old prejudices, and teach agriculture as a science. There are implements and appliances wanting, which must gradually be provided, lent, or hired; and, above all, there are habits of industry to be generated or encouraged.

With hope will come effort; the peasant will begin to respect himself; and that kind of pride arise which is the parent of respectability. As for religion; although I am a Protestant myself, and although I confess—what indeed my previous writings show only too clearly—that I am unable to think without a smile, or scarcely even to talk without a sneer, of the existence of the Catholic faith in the nineteenth century, yet I must, in common fairness, say, that in Ireland I cannot trace clearly the influence of any thing but physical circumstances upon moral character. Protestant and Catholic, when in the same condition, are alike. When without hope of the rewards of industry, they are both lazy, both wretched. Their crimes are committed, without distinction, on those of their own and those of the opposite faith. Their social virtues and vices are the same.

Two or three miles from Baltinglass the road, crossing the river Slaney, enters an extensive

plantation called Saunder's Grove. To the right of this, in a direct line, and within reach of the pedestrian, lies the Glen of Imaal, an immense chasm, of which the farther side is formed by the cliffs of Lugnaquilla, the colossus of Wicklow, being upwards of three thousand feet above the level of the sea. This huge valley belonged, as we have seen above, to the O'Toole's, who styled themselves kings, and who are the heroes of the *poetical* legends of the Seven Churches. In modern times, it has been quite as much distinguished by having been the birth-place, and customary haunt, of a bold desperado called Dwyer, who flourished during the rebellion of 1798. An adventure of this person at Glendalough is well described by the author of "A Day at the Seven Churches;" to whom I shall be beholden for a few more sentences.

"Many a day and night he lay within the face of yon hill—Kevin's bed was his retreat and his sleeping place, till it was made too hot for him. Government, hearing that this was his haunt, sent down the Highlanders; they thought that, because they were mountain men, they were the only match for the boys. But soon Tim Dwyer showed the Sawnies a trick or two worth larning—not but that the pitticoats were fine fellows; and if they knew the mountain-passes, and the caves, and the bogs, and the toghers, they may-be would have snaffled

Dwyer; but every cock crows best on his own dunghill; so Dwyer and his boys made a show of them.

“Dwyer, gentlemen, was one summer’s morning lying fast asleep in the Bed, and a serjeant guard of the Highlanders was patrolling along on the other side of the lake just opposite to us; the party was commanded by serjeant Donald M’Bane, who is remembered here to this day as one of the best shots that ever rammed down a bullet; some people were even led to believe he could shoot a man round a corner. Well, this keen canny Sawney thought he saw something in the bed, and he ups with his terrible gun, and, sure enough, he was near giving Dwyer his billet for the other world—for the ball grazed his thigh, cut away the skin upon his ribs, but did no real injury except tapping a little of his blood; and now my poor fellow thought it high time for him to bolt; and so, naked, that he might run light, he took to his well-known pass up the face of Lugduff. The highlanders, like sporting fellows, immediately grounded their muskets, and bayonet in hand, started off in pursuit; some making after him by the head of the lake, towards Gleneola; others turned to the left, and made their way over the stream by Polanass.

“In the meanwhile, Dwyer was toiling up the face of the mountain, and they could see a streak of



blood running from shoulder to flank, and down the white limbs of the clean-skinned fellow; when half way up the hill, he turned round to look after the Scotchmen, and saw that all had turned either to the right or left of the lake in making towards him, and left the whole of Comaderry side without a man. Dwyer at once changed his plan, bounced and bounded down the face of the hill, plunged into the lake at Templenaskellig, swam across the water before you could say Jack Robinson, and took possession of all the Scotchmen's muskets and cartridge-boxes—and now may-be it was not he that shouted, and crowed, and triumphed, as one after another he pitched the guns and ammunition into the lake; you could hear his huzzas rattling and echoing through the hills, as if the mountains clapped hands with joy, and tossed the triumph from one to another; he then very leisurely lounged away towards Toulénagee mountain, and so off towards his old haunts under Lugnaquilla."

Passing through Saunder's Grove, I arrived at Stratford-upon-Slaney, a town built upon somewhat too extensive a speculation by the Earl of Aldborough, near the close of the last century. It was his lordship's intention to found a manufacturing city in one of the wildest and least travelled districts in Ireland; and he laid down at once the plan of a church, four squares, and twelve streets, in the parallelo-grammatic taste of Mr.

Owen. During the war, the single calico-printing establishment here gave employment to four hundred workmen, who were almost the only inhabitants of the town; and this branch of trade having fallen off, the town, which had no other dependence, has fallen off too. Lord Aldborough's mistake was in supposing that a town could form a manufactory, whereas it is invariably the manufactory which forms the town. The experiment, however, showed public spirit and energy of a kind very rare in Ireland. His lordship takes the title of baron from the neighbouring town of Baltinglass.

Two miles from this is Donard, where the traveller, passing a road to the right at the bottom of the Black Mountain, may reach the waterfall of Ess and the fastnesses of Glenmalure, by a route now almost abandoned. If, from this place, he sets out for the ascent of Lugnaquilla, he will pass through a glen of very singular formation; one side of which being formed of pillars of granite blocks, as perpendicular as the wall of a house. Lugnaquilla itself has no feature of grandeur but massiveness; excepting, probably, at the place where its precipices overhang the Glen of Imail. It is easy of ascent, even to the unpractised pedestrian; and is covered with green-sward to the summit.

Before the rebellion of 1798, there were only three passes by which the wilds of Wicklow could be entered ; and one of these was the chasm between the mountains at the Ess waterfalls, approached by the Donard road. This was the most practicable of the three ; the Wicklow gap, and the Sally Gap, being nearly impassable. It is needless to say, that there are many legends connected with these savage avenues ; but I was particularly interested by a brief anecdote I heard at Donard.

According to this story, two young men, of respectable families in Dublin, were under the necessity, like many others, of seeking safety and freedom among the mountains. It was, at first, their purpose to dive into the recesses of Glenmalure by the Donard pass ; but, learning that they were beset, they determined, as soon as they had fairly entered the chain of hills at the Ess waterfall, to turn away to the right by the base of Lugnaquilla, and seek for protection in the lower part of the county, where one of them had some powerful kinsmen. The two young men, although as yet firm friends, were rivals in love ; and they had remained so long firm friends, the rather that their mistress, with an art well known to the Irish girls, had hitherto kept the balance with a steady hand, allowing neither party to fear that he was slighted because of the other. In an emergency



like this, however, the wiles of female policy were forgotten ; she selected openly him whom she had secretly preferred from the first ; and, with a generous devotion, determined to accompany him in his flight.

The rejected lover was prevented, by a certain reserve in his character, from betraying any unmanly emotion at a blow so sudden and unexpected. His cheek blanched, his eyes grew dim, a blight fell upon his heart, and, had he not caught the arm of his friend, he must have fallen to the ground. In another moment, however, his self-possession returned. He did not blame, as he said, a predilection honourable to the lady herself ; and he would strive to build up the ruins of his love into enduring friendship.

The three fled together. After reaching Donard, and striking into the wild mountain road, the perils of the journey commenced ; and the successful lover cursed the selfish feelings which had induced him to expose so fair and fragile a being to the difficulties of such a journey. They were all three on horseback ; but, owing probably to unskilful management, the young lady's steed began to exhibit symptoms of fatigue when as yet the other two were fresh. On this a noble proof of disinterestedness was given by the Discarded. He offered to surrender the fine animal on which he rode to his quondam mistress ; and, as hers was

too light for the weight of a man, to find his way alone, and on foot, through the fastnesses of Lugnaquilla. This offer was firmly rejected; and he repeated it again and again with solemn earnestness. He reminded them that his boyhood had been spent among these wilds, that he knew every inch of the ground, and that, in all probability, even on foot he should be able to rival their speed in a country so uneven. All was in vain; and the horseman, with a deep sigh, pursued his way, leading the march as before.

When they at length reached the end of the mountain road, which winds like one of the passes of the Alps, and arrived at the deep chasm between the Table mountain and Carnavally, where the Ess waterfall plunges down the steep, it became no longer doubtful that the lady's horse must be abandoned. The roar of the Waterfall was already in their ear. The sun had set, and a dusky hue had settled over the whole scene, exaggerating the dangers of the cliffs, and throwing

“—— a browner horror o'er the woods.”

They halted; and the Discarded, after urging in vain his former generous offer, entreated his rival at least to change horses, his being by far the stronger animal of the two. This was agreed to; and the terrified girl mounted behind her lover;

and they then recommenced their dangerous flight.

The deeper they descended into the chasm, or ravine, the darker it became ; till at length it might have seemed that they had plunged at once from daylight into night. The dim form of the cliffs above, as they were seen traced against the sky, acquired a character of unearthly mystery ; the wind seemed to shriek as it rushed through the pass ; and the hoarse voice of the waterfall fell like a sound of terrible omen upon the ear of the travellers. The young lady clung to her lover in an agony of fear, burying her face in his cloak ; yet refraining from adding to his perplexities by giving utterance to the feelings which agitated her woman's heart. At this period, the Discarded proved himself to be their true friend. He assured them that the moon would speedily rise, and dispel all the seeming horrors of their situation ; he even spoke cheerfully, or attempted to do so, although ever and anon his voice sunk to that calm monotony which indicates that the speaker is indifferent, as regards himself, to the feelings of hope or joy he would inspire in others.

They were now skirting by the side of the Avonbeg river, of which Glenmalure is the valley ; when the report of a musket on the opposite bank convinced them that their information had been correct, and that the rebels were even now hunted



in their mountain fastnesses. It had been their intention before to turn speedily to the right, in order to skirt along the side of Lugnaquilla, but on this alarm they determined to press farther up the brow of the mountain, taking the upper side of that singular glen I have mentioned. This part of the route was unknown to the lover except by description; but he perceived at once that it would be the safest course to pursue; and even the young lady derived new strength from the idea, that they should soon have between them and danger so dreadful a barrier. They continued, therefore, to follow steadily the calm horseman, who led the way as before.

It was necessary at first, in order to prevent the sound of their horses' hoofs from being heard, to choose a soft part of the sward which covers the greater portion of Lugnaquilla. Near the side of the glen, this is occasionally diversified by smooth flat rocks, laid like a pavement along the precipice; and, standing on one of them, the traveller, whose head is steady enough, may look perpendicularly down to the very bottom of the abyss. It was not, however, to avoid the danger of approaching too near, that the leader made a detour, but solely for the purpose above mentioned. He was so nicely acquainted with the path that even the trees which at this place cover here and there the side of the mountain, and sometimes hang their branches over

the gulf, could not deceive his eye. He was able, as his friend knew by report, to ride at full gallop along the precipice ; and therefore the lovers, when they found themselves fairly on the mountain's brow, with the glen—they knew not, and cared not at what distance—between them and the Avonbeg, enjoyed a feeling of security which they had not been able to indulge since leaving Dublin, and all the greater now from the real danger, and fantastic terrors, of their late situation.

More than once the gloomy horseman was compelled to turn round, and desire them to quicken their pace. They obeyed for the moment ; but soon, forgetting the injunction, they lingered unconsciously to indulge in the soft whispers, and harmless endearments, of avowed and mutual love. Once the voice of the monitor startled them by its stern and wild expression ; but as he turned away, riding calmly and slowly on, they thought that they must have been deceived. The moon, however, was now up ; they could proceed with confidence, even without a guide ; and their spirits rose with that beautiful orb, which, in all times, has been considered the star of lovers. They were now in a little wilderness of low trees, which concealed the figure of their friend, although the near tramp of his horse was distinctly enough heard on the green sward to serve for a guide.

The Discarded in the meantime rode on, in a

tumult of feelings which it is impossible to describe. Hitherto he had been the protector of his mistress. He had led her on through darkness and danger, which her chosen one, from his ignorance of the localities, must have been unable to face; and, in the exercise of this magnanimity he had enjoyed a species of painful consolation. When he saw her placed on the same horse; when he saw her arms wound round his rival's waist, and her face hidden in his cloak, a sickness had fallen upon his heart, which only the exigence of the danger which followed could have overcome. There was at that time a wildness in his voice, and a bitterness in his heart, while he spoke to exhort and cheer them, which shocked even himself; but by and by, all this was at an end, and in ascending the mountains, he had felt as if he enjoyed the tranquillity of death.

But this was not to continue long. His soul was stung, even through its gloom, by the sight of their mutual endearments; which added fearful bitterness to his feelings of despised love, and wounded pride. Had they obeyed his first warning, he could even then have deadened, in some measure, the agony of his spirit; nay, if his second had been heard, he could have crushed down, as if by physical force, the tumult of passions that arose within him; but when, for the third time he met the withering spectacle, and the sanctity of his despair had been profaned and outraged by the



light gay voices of happy love, the wretched man dashed the rowels into his steed, and only reined him in when the animal himself started back aghast on finding that he was on the brink of the awful precipice.

With a powerful wrench, he threw the horse back upon his haunches when on the very brink, but did not permit him to retreat till he had looked down for some moments into the abyss below. God knows what ideas passed through his mind at that moment—what shapes he saw, or what sounds he heard, issuing from the gulf ! His brain began to turn ; he imagined he felt the approach of insanity ; and at length, with a desperate effort, he closed his eyes against the fascination which had seized upon them, and permitted his terrified steed to retire a few paces into the trees which here skirted the glen.

The lovers were not in sight, but he could hear the sound of their horse's hoofs, as they slowly approached the place where he stood ; and he remained there for some moments trembling in every limb, and wiping the cold perspiration from his brow. At length they appeared ; and the Discarded leaped in his saddle, as if struck by a bullet. The youth had turned half round, so as to embrace the neck and waist of his mistress ; her head lay back ; her dishevelled hair hung upon his knee ; and leaning passionately over her he pressed

his lips again and again to hers. On this picture the moon shone with the light almost of day ; and their horse ambled softly along, as if fearing to disturb so agreeable a position.

They started in confusion, and the young girl shrunk back, as they found their way suddenly barred by the other horseman. His face was deathly pale ; his clenched hand was extended either in menace or warning, above his head ; and his eyes, shone upon by the moonlight, seemed to be filled with a wild and preternatural lustre.

“ Pardon me, my friend,” said the lover ; “ the glen must now be nearly past, and, if you will point out our route, we shall lead the way, to convince you that you have no more delay to fear from us.” The Discarded attempted to speak ; but instead of words, only some specks of white foam came from his lips, accompanied by a sound that resembled a stifled cry.

“ Which is the route ?” demanded his friend again, moving on ; “ Point with your hand, if you are too angry to speak.” He pointed ; and, dashing his spurs into his horse’s sides, the lover sprang forward.

As they passed the pale horseman, a low cry broke from the lips of the girl, elicited either by some sudden foreboding, or merely by the wild and despairing expression of one to whose disinterested generosity they owed so much. Her cry was

replied to by a laugh, resembling a succession of hoarse screams ; and before the sound could be caught up by the echoes of the glen, the unhappy pair were carried headlong over the steep.

The materials of this narrative, which, I believe, is very little known, were collected by a priest some time after from the lips of him whom I have distinguished as the discarded lover, immediately before his execution for high treason. Instead of proceeding, as he had intended, to the stronghold of a relation in the barony of Shillelagh, he returned, after the catastrophe related above, and crossing the Avonbeg, with no definite purpose that could be ascertained, was taken by the loyalists after a desperate but hopeless resistance. So little traversed was the glen at that time, that it was not till after his confession had directed attention to the spot, that the remains of the lovers were discovered. They were identified by their clothes and valuables ; but nothing remained of the bodies, either of them or of their horse, but the skeletons.

From Donard I proceeded to Hollywood, leaving on my right, about midway, the Sliebh Gadoe, or Church Mountain. This hill is about two thirds of the height of Lugnaquilla, and resembles it a good deal in character. On the summit are some ruins of which nothing is known ; and beside them a



sacred well, which is the resort of many pilgrims and penitents. There is hardly a well in Ireland which is not possessed of some miraculous property; and more especially, if one is found in a lonely place, or in the neighbourhood of ruins which the imagination may convert into the remains of a chapel, it is immediately set down as a pool, whose waters have the gift of relieving the faithful from the burthen of their sins. The spectacle presented at such places is curious, though undoubtedly humiliating; when numbers of men and women are seen crawling round the spot on their hands and knees, and stooping ever and anon to kiss some particular stone or sod.

Hollywood is a miserable village, and Bally Eustace beyond it is not much better; but between the two there is an object which will afford pleasure to the lover of the picturesque, even after he has traversed the rest of the country. This is the Waterfall of Pol-a-Phuca, or the Demon's Hole. The river Liffey is confined at this place in a channel scarcely forty feet wide, and descending in three distinct stages about a hundred and fifty feet. The sides are formed of perpendicular masses of rock. I had no opportunity of seeing the cascade in its moody hour; but I can easily conceive that after much rain the centre fall at least must possess a good deal of the grandeur which arises from volume and impetuosity. The

action of the waters has worn the deep bed of rock into which they plunge into a form almost circular ; and this again, reacting upon the stream, increases its rotary motion till it becomes a formidable eddy or whirlpool.

It is precisely over this part, the most striking of the whole, that the road is carried. A bridge spans the gulf from rock to rock, in a manner at once beautiful and daring ; and the traveller looks down from the parapet into the middle of the whirlpool. The glen does not belong to the same proprietor ; one side being the property of the See of Dublin, and the other that of Lord Milltown. His lordship has taken much pains to afford visitors an opportunity of seeing the cascade with facility and advantage. The side of the steep is hung with woods, and summer houses and grottoes are scattered throughout, and seats placed at the proper points of view.

Ballymore Eustace, from a town of some consideration, has sunk into an insignificant village, exhibiting every mark of decay and neglect. It was founded, shortly after the invasion, by the English family of Eustace ; the ruins of whose castle are still to be seen close by.

The road next passes through the demesne of Rossborough, the seat of the Earl of Milltown. The house, built entirely of cut stone, may, without exaggeration, be called magnificent. It contains a

collection of paintings said to be fine, but shut up, I believe, from strangers, with a harshness not frequently met with among the British nobility. A circumstance very honourable to the Scottish character is told here. During the rebellion of ninety-eight a highland regiment was quartered in the house and village, for a considerable time ; but, on their departure, not one of these pictures, now so jealously guarded, was found to be even removed from its place.

Two miles further on is the little town of Blessington, which gives the title of Earl to the family of Gardiner. There are here granite quarries of considerable extent ; and the place in general affords evidences of industry. The village of Saggard next appears, only six miles from Dublin ; and the Slade of Saggard, as the defile through the hills is called, leads for about a mile through a waste and dreary soil. On the right, at some distance, are the Kippure hills, where is the source of the Liffey, and which, though so short a distance from the capital, form an extensive tract of uninhabited country. Passing through the miserable village of Tallaght—Roundtown—Rathmines, none of them worth a remark, I at length reached Dublin again.

To a sincere lover of Nature, the tour I have just finished is one of the most delightful in



Europe ; but to him who, instead of abandoning himself to the poetry of the world, lives and hath his being in the joys and sorrows of his own kind, it will be productive of many a bitter thought, and many a melancholy hour. It is not a little annoying to me, that in a work so intimately connected (in its pictorial part) with the beautiful and imaginative, I should have found it my duty to attempt to dispel some of those poetical dreams which float, like her water-clouds, over the soil of Ireland. I cannot force myself, however, to respect those sympathies which turn away from the present, to waste themselves in melodious regrets over a doubtful, if not shameful past ; or to admire those political struggles, the object of which is to heal the "wounded pride" of a few, while the great mass of the people—while the Irish Nation—is steeped in misery and want. I cannot amuse myself with the glories of Brian the Brave, or with Malachi and his collar of gold, while I see their descendants sinking, through neglect and hunger, at my feet. I cannot pant for a seat in parliament or a silk gown, while the cry of a whole nation for bread is in my ear. In fine, I cannot be a Tory, a Whig, or a Radical, or lend myself to any merely political schemes of any party, till I see placed within the reach of this neglected and degraded people the comforts, or at least the necessities of civilized beings.

In our next volume, I hope to have an opportunity of describing the rest of the island, not only in its picturesque and romantic character, and in its customs, manners, and legends, but in the social condition of the people. I shall also be prepared to contribute my humble mite towards the inquiries that are now found so interesting and important, touching the influence of the priesthood, the moral effect of the two forms of Christianity, the state and progress of literature, education, and general knowledge, and other subjects which at present I have been unable to touch, either from want of space or materials.

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